



**ABDUR REHMAN CHUGHTAI AND
HIS LYRICO PAINTING
(A CRITICAL STUDY)**

**ABSTRACT
THESIS**

SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF

**Doctor of Philosophy
IN
FINE ART**

BY

Mrs. REHANA KHUSRO

**Under the Supervision of
Professor Ashfaq . M. Rizvi**

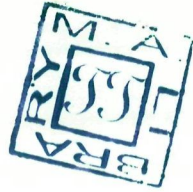
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THESIS SUBMITTED

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Abstract

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In the history of Islam there have been many Muslim painters, but our own century has produced only one painter of such a high stature, that is Mohd Abdur Rahman Chughtai.

Twentieth century Muslim Civilization was without a Muslim painter, till M.A. Rahman Chughtai's name swept the world. The term "Chughtai Art" became a household word in the region. He was a Master of the grand old tradition all in the framework of the old linear qualities and water-colour subtle effects, and yet in other ways, completely modern in many respects-different scale of work, different perception, different media, different style, and at times all different subject matters. It is no small thing that Modern Islamic painting is synonymous with the name of M.A. Rahman Chughtai, and even usually hesitant Western circles, clearly acknowledge him as a modern

Master, with references such as "The greatest Islamic painter of the century".

M.A. Rahman Chughtai was born on 21st September, 1897 in his ancestral city of Lahore in Mohallah Chabuk Sawaran, and lived in the city of his birth for over sixty years. In this period he completed nearly 2000 masterpieces of watercolours works, thousands of pencils sketches, nearly 300 etchings and aquatints, and as a writer wrote hundreds of short stories, articles on art, a few research books, some film scripts, and many publications of his own art. He designed many things including some mausoleums, tombstones, monetary coins, national international insignias, postal stamps and hundreds of dust-covers for books. He was an avid collector and had an unrivaled collection of Indo-Pakistan miniatures, European engravings, Japanese woodcuts, Islamic calligraphy, and thousands of rare books on the Fine Arts. All these he wished to house in a museum of his own in Lahore, for which he also preserved the bulk of his own work

The ancestry of M.A. Rahman Chughtai is a tale of the Arts and related Royal patronage. As talent in architecture, calligraphy, naqashi, mathematics, astronomy, writing and painting has always abounded in his family, it is no wonder that

the record of such patronage in the last fourteen generations, include Royal favours from Emperor Shah Abbass of Persia, Emperor Shah Jahan of India, and also in the 1st century, from Maharaja Ranjit Singh of the Punjab. M. A. Rahman Chughtai was himself variously honoured by the Government of British Indo-Pakistan (with the title of Khan Bahadur), and later on by the Government of Pakistan with the titles of "Atil-e-Imtiaz" and "Pride of Performance". President Field Marshal Muhammad Ayub Khan of Pakistan paid him the highest tribute by a state visit to his home, and by personally inaugurating many of his exhibition shows.

M. A. Rahman Chughtai became a legend within his own lifetime. Almost entirely self-taught in painting, he had brief nagashi education at the Wazeer Khan's Mosque in Lahore, from his famous uncle, Baba Miran Baksh Nagash. He laid the basis of his own school of Art on the best art values of Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Indo-Pakistan, Japan and China. He chose the water-colour media for his projections and utilized the wide capacity of the flowing line work with graded wash-colouring techniques. It was for no ordinary reason that the people gave him the title of "Mussavar-e-Mahriq:-Artist of the East". But that does not mean that he was remote from Western life. In his extensive tours

of Europe he studied and appreciated the best that the West could offer, and assimilated some of it but he never forsake the land of his birth. It may be true that History of Art of Asia cannot be in any way be complete without his name, but it is far more true that he holds his own in the ranks of the Great masters of the World.

From M.A. Rahman Chughtai's First public exhibition in Lahore in 1920 to the last one in 1998 his works have been exhibited in almost all the major art centers of the world. The works of M.A. Rahman Chughtai are included in collections of British museum London, Victoria and Albert Museum London, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and National Museum of Modern Arts Delhi, amongst many others. His works are also found in such places like the peace Palace Hague, United Nation as Headquarters New York, Kennedy memorial Boston, US State Department Washington D.C, President House Bonn, International Postal Union Beren, Nizam Hyderabad's place Delhi, Queen Julienne's Palace Holland, emperor's Palace Bangkok, and many other public places including the President's House

Islamabad, Governor's House Lahore and Governor's House Karachi. His work has been reviewed by major art critics of the world and articles on his art have appeared in major magazines and relevant art books.

He loved playing cricket, flying kites, fishing and hunting, and in the tradition of his elders eating mangoes. He married Wazeer-unn-Nisa begum in 1911 and Kishwar Tybal Begum in 1944. He had two children, a daughter by the name of Mussarat Chughtai and a son by the name of Arif Rahman Chughtai. His lifelong companion included his youngest brother Abdur Raheem Chughtai, who died on 23rd September, 1992. He himself died on 17th January, 1975, leaving behind a legacy of his art for the future and character content of his works which made him the most unique artist of our times. At present he lies buried on the premises of his proposed Chughtai Museum, awaiting a final befitting mausoleum. His museum is run by his own family who are doing everything possible to preserve and promote his works (in the national interest of Pakistan, as well as the cause of Muslim Civilization). Chughtai has always appealed to me as a great lover of life. Unlike his contemporaries, he shuns to

depict anemic figures swooning away in morbid ecstasies, and portrays only virile types of men and women.

And yet his paintings have great aesthetic value for he has first mastered his technique and then bent it to his purpose. His beautiful draperies, his architectural backgrounds, his harem scenes represent the very essence of Persian and Moghul culture, but none of his figures, mostly poets and princes, show any sign of effeminacy, usually associated with court life.

He was an Idealist by nature, and his attempts to resuscitate the past, signify only his dissatisfaction with the short comings of the present, and a desire to mould a better future line by line with his ideal.

Diwan-I-Ghalib is a pioneer work in Indian publication and it is hoped that it will be successful in inaugurating the pure cult of beauty for which Chughtai is always striving.

Chughtai's paintings are poems set not to music but colour and line. Like, poetry they assume a ritualistic mood and say something more than what is said. Chughtai is a poet as well as a painter. In all Chughtai's pictures, there is an exquisite refinement of mood and method, a lyrical

ferour in every line. Effects are economically achieved through concentration on the main theme of the picture.

His paintings are a proof of his amazing imagination, splendid harmony of colours, and richness of decoration. Like all great artists he moves as a poet among the colours and scenes of today.

Anyone interested in Modern Indian Art will be delighted with this beautifully produced volume with its wealth of plates, its reproduction of the artist's illuminated designs and pencil sketches. The publishers announcement says "No such book was ever produced in India" and we can well believe it.

Chughtai's outlook is romantic; he works, as most Orientals, by rule of thumb, rather than observation; he sees through the spectacles of his ancestors, rather than with his own unaided eyes. Everything he touches is a superb piece of craftsmanship. We can learn much from this remarkable economy of means and materials. The definition of art is, no doubt, the verbal expression of the spontaneous joy of the artist who creates; and art is the supreme mode of free self-expression.

Chughtai has, in an abundant measure, the artist's delicate spirit of choice and subtle tact of omission. Chughtai finds his motif everywhere, and all his pictures seem to whisper that there is always an escape from this sordid world into a wider and more beautiful one. Shy and sensitive, gentle and strong, Chughtai was a charming man with a big bold face, robust nature and a distinctive individuality. He does not boast or brag or scowl at those who are more happily placed than he is, but is ever, happy, cheerful, kind and generous.

In Modern Indian Art, Chughtai has been acclaimed as one of the most virile, and gifted artist that Indian Renaissance has produced. His fame is international. For his characteristic style perfect technique and universal appeal he has been described as the artist of all Nations. Chughtai is not a contemporary artist, he is something different, something greater. Cultivation of Chughtai's art does not generate transitory emotion but produces sublime aesthetic exultation that ennobles the spirit. Chughtai is a unique artistic phenomena of our age. He represents the highest achievement of Modern Indian Art.

Chughtai's fame as an artist of great sensitiveness, refinement and skill is well established. Many years ago he stormed his way into the heart of art lovers by his portrayal of medieval themes in beautiful lines and soft melodious colours which had an individuality of their own. In the exhibitions his paintings attracted notice and held visitors spell bound by their languorous sweetness, and by the magic of their composition.

Chughtai art has been ripening with time and as Iqbal said, it is moving towards its own perfection. He has consistently endeavored to realize one aim portrayal of the joy and beauty of India wonderfully rich, composite and with a variegated life as seen through the eyes of a poet-artist who had identified himself with all the aspects of this life and who has sought to rise above all differences of race and creed.

Chughtai concentrated on purity and human insight, casting off prejudice and achieving master pieces reminiscent of the old glory, the great history of the Muslims. This painter enjoys unlimited authority in Pakistan art circles. Many have tried to imitate him but did not succeed in even approaching his style.

Abdur Rahman Chughtai, is undoubtedly the finest living exponent of the Mughal School and brilliant water-colorist in his own right. A direct descendent of a reputed family of Mughal Artists and Architects, Chughtai started painting in the traditional style, but developed his own distinctive way of drawing figures and applying colours which bear the mark a great personality. He is remarkable for the liquid flowing line of his grace figures, in etching, a medium which he has used with great vigour and felicity. Chughtai has perfected this individual style and is today looked upon as an acknowledged master and as the builder of an impressive tradition.

The pictorial arts thus runs through the veins of Chughtai, who out of some generic sentiments resuscitates the old Persian mannerism in a flat romantic style of his own devising. The figures are sometimes made slender or tapering or unusually longer. This distortion has added to the beauty of figures and not detracted anything from them. His self study in that art of drawing and etching has given him complete control over the plastic line, which under this touch has become instinctively pliant and fluid.

Chughtai combines in his work the traditions of the Muslim masters and the contemporary view of art as having beauty in its own right rather than a mirror of reality. While his work is thoroughly representational, he has nevertheless bestowed upon his subjects modern techniques of abstraction and stylization. In his colours also he has combined the Eastern love of the bright and radiant with the western romantic tradition. It is a paradox this completely modern artist is widely credited with the renaissance of Muslim art in Pakistan.

It is beauty allied with power in Iqbal's poetry, that has impelled Chughtai's gifted brush to transmute his ideas into his inimitable combination of colours and lines that in sensitivity and the quality of pictorial lyricism that characterize his paintings have already assured the Artist a niche in the temple of fame.

Chughtai is a very famous national and traditional painter. Also we can say that he is the greatest oriental paintmaster. He contributed a lot to the current world arts. We were deeply impressed here and learned a lot here. We absorbed a lot in the language of arts, especially in the technique of "Line". The Master of Chughtai's paintings

is a poem, and Boldness, is a song. Chughtai's paintings
just like the most beautiful flowers will remain in our hearts
for ever.

Rehana Khusro



Sistiy Rym
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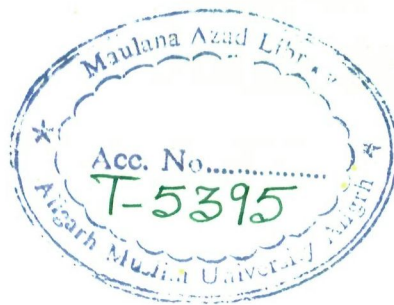
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Aligarh Muslim University
Aligarh, India

Certificate

This is to certify that the research work embodied in this thesis entitled "Abdur Rehman Chughtai & His Lyrico Paintings" (A critical Study) has been carried out by Mrs. Rehana Khusro under my guidance.

As far as I am aware this work is original and has not been submitted so far in part or full, for any other degree in this or any other university. She is allowed to submit the work for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Fine Art, of the Department of Fine Art, Aligarh Muslim University Aligarh.

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*Dedicated
to my
loving Parents*



Dr. Mrs. Sirtaj Rizvi

Chairperson

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A.M.U.

*I express deep gratitude for her kind
cooperation & valuable suggestions
when ever needed for my research work.*

Abdur Rehman Chughtai
&
His Lyrico Paintings
A - Critical study



Contents

<i>Acknowledgement</i>	<i>Page No.</i>
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>1-4</i>
<i>Chapter - 1</i> <i>Profile of the Artist</i>	<i>5-61</i>
<i>Chapter - 2</i> <i>The Technique & Style of</i> <i>Akdul Rehman Chughtai's</i> <i>Lyrical Painting.</i>	<i>62-80</i>
<i>Chapter - 3</i> <i>Contours of Popular romantic poetry</i> <i>& Chughtai's "Lyrical-painting"</i> <i>a thematic appreciation.</i>	<i>81-135</i>
<i>Chapter - 4</i> <i>Art structure & the composition</i> <i>of Lyrical-Paintings</i>	<i>136-163</i>

Chapter - 5 *164-188*

*Important poets (Ghalib, Iqbal
and Omar Khayyam) as a source
of Mannerism to Chughtai's
Lyrico-paintings*

Chapter - 6 *189-202*

*Cultural Entity of the
Lyrico-paintings.*

Conclusion *203-215*

Bibliography

Plates and Sketches



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I owe profound gratitude to my learned and eminent supervisor Prof. A. M. Rizvi for his advice and supervision of my research work which would not have been possible without his help and guidance.

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Every research work require help and cooperation. I have been lucky to receive guidance and cooperation form all quarters.

First of all, I owe my profound gratitude to my leaned and eminent supervisor Professor A.M. Rizvi without his encouragement, cooperation and atle guidance its would not have been possible for me to compile this research study.

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I am indebted for the privilege accorded to me by Atdul Rehman Chughtai's son Arif Rehman Chughtai, Director of Chughtai Museum Trust, Lahore (Pakistan) and Amin ul-Rehman, Deputy Director, Lahore Arts Council for making most of the related valuable material and literature available for my research work and offering suggestions on the form and content of the study when ever I needed.

Thanks are due to the following Museum, galleries and libraries who extended their full cooperation: Chughtai

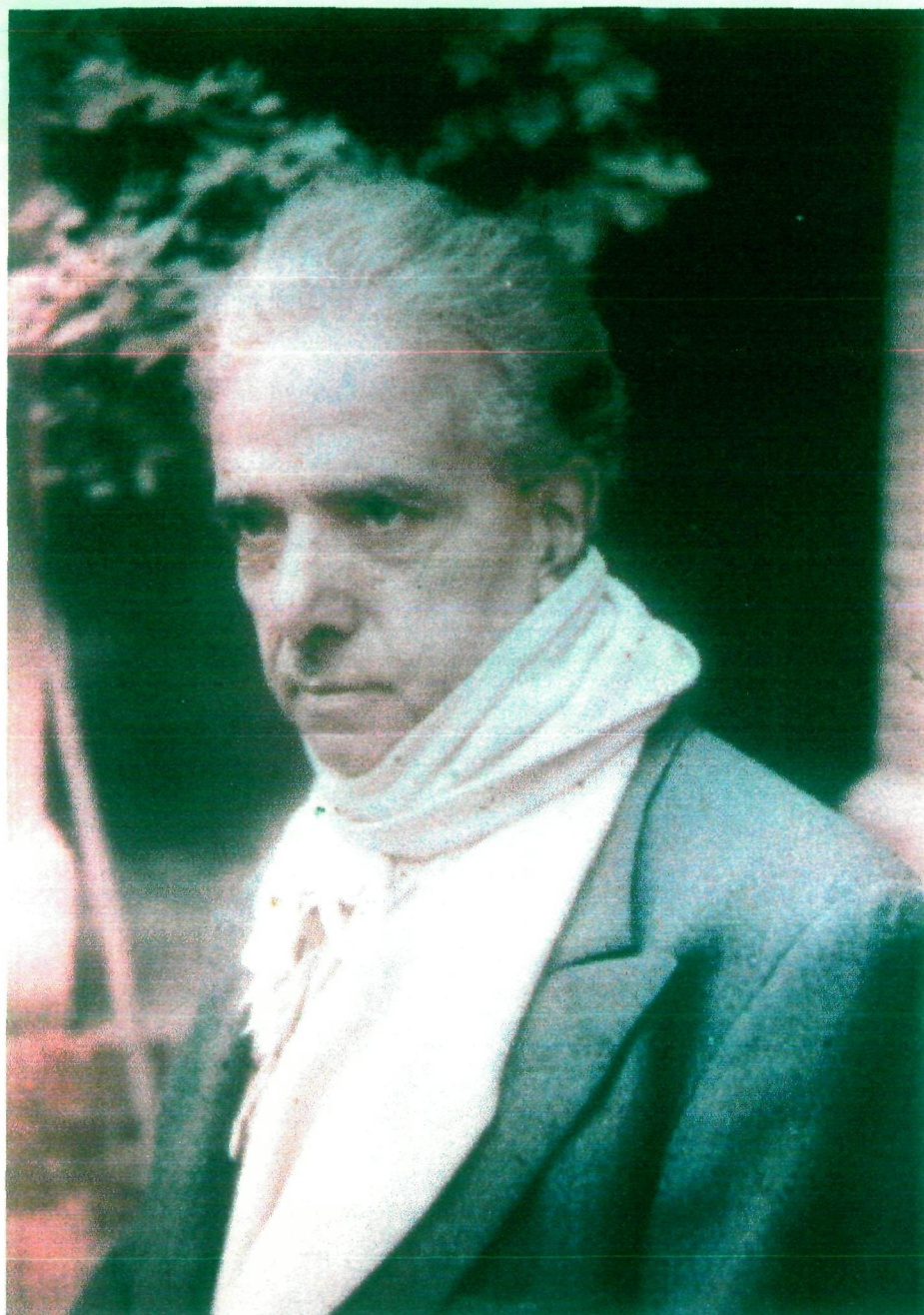
Museum Trust, Lahore (Pakistan); The Lahore Museum, Lahore; Maulana Azad Library National Museum, New Delhi; National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi; Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi; State Archaeological Museum, Hyderabad.

I must also express my gratitude to Mr. Bagar & Mrs. Masood of Maulana Azad Library A.M. U.

My Colleagues my friends and non-teaching staff of my department and well-wishers gave me help and encouragement and I am particularly thankful to my husband, Mohd Aslam who has helped me in collecting materials and authentic information^s in this research. I am really grateful to my brother Anwar Ahmad Khusró & My father^s Syed Mohd. Ahmad Khusró who gave me support and cooperation in compiling this research work. I also extended my heartfelt thanks to all family members who gave the benefit of their discerning criticism and their penetrating suggestions paving the way to a qualitative thesis.

Rehana Khusró

Mrs Rehana Khusró



Mohd. Abdur Rehman Chughtai
The great oriental Artist

Born on Twenty First September Eighteen Ninty Seven.
He Breathed his last on Seventh January Ninty Seventy Five.

X

Introduction

Explaining poetry through paintings is one of the significant modes of comprehending and expounding poetry. We must therefore give due recognition to those artists who have produced paintings explaining verses. This has been the motivating factor for me in doing research on Chughtai's lyrical paintings.

When I was in Delhi to spend some holidays I went to see an exhibition of paintings. There I saw a washed painting of a young artist. It was in the tempera style like "Chughtai". then I went to National gallery of modern art there I came across the paintings delineated in wash and tempera in the section of Bengal school which were very fascinating to look at. I stood there for some time and admired the usage of soft and brilliant hues. The electrifying lines vibrated my nerves for the moment. These were the paintings executed by Abdul Rehman Chughtai.

I was swept away in my dreams and I decided to work on his paintings to understand the mystery of colour sensation and his style which was heart throbbing. I discussed the idea of doing research on Chughtai's painting with my husband and friends but I selected those paintings which he made on lyrics, poetry, love and romance. (Ghalib, Iqbal and Omar Khayyam).

Poetry is paramount in every culture and poets have placed on a high pedestal in every culture, because poetry occupies a very significant place in a civilized society and as "Wordsworth" said that "poetry is the centre and the circumference of all knowledge".

On the suggestion of my Husband Mohd Aslam I discussed with my learned Prof. A.M. Rizvi for doing research work on Chughtai and when I put up my proposal for doing research under his guidance he acceded to my request and so the research work started. I made many visits to Delhi, to get first hand information and to see the originals if possible.

Providentially, most of the collectors with a few exception, happened to be responsive persons who were aware of the reality that paintings are not only exquisite and unusual product meant to be cornered and observed but must be registered on the records to retain their essence for long and so they provided me full cooperation in compiling the

research study smoothly. Apart from the libraries, museums, art galleries and personal efforts, Arif Chughtai was the main source of furnishing essential materials to me. All these records are preserved in archives section of Chughtai Museum Trust, Lahore, (Pakistan). This documentary proof further strengthened the authenticity of my research study.

Chughtai's paintings, art journal of Chughtai, Pamphlets, booklets, essays, poems, short stories, photographs, newspapers, clippings, brochures of the exhibitions, letters, medals, honourable mention certificates and above all the original paintings were valuable materials for completing my research work. Art critics and scholars augment the required data and material for this dissertation.

Though Chughtai's superiority and mastery over his work and never been challenged a controversy over his modernity has cropped up ever since his death in 1975. In 1971, Jalaluddin Ahmad once mentioned about Chughtai's art and commented upon in a very subtle manner in his article "Chughtai and his contemporaries" in *Focus on Pakistan*, that elder artists are provincial and their work and style have not changed very much and are

almost dated. Still A.R. Chughtai remains an unparalleled artist of indo-Iranian mysticism and idiom. A chain of articles, comments and criticism was published after his death in the leading news papers of Pakistan. Even Indian Press and radio carried the news of the death, also the Prime Minister of India sent her condolence message to the bereaved family of Chughtai saying that he (Chughtai) has enhanced the cultural traditions of our region.

I have compiled my dissertation on the fact that Chughtai was one of the important artists of India of the 20th century who was born in India, began his career in India and matured in India before he was known as "Artist of the East" in Pakistan.

Chapter 1

Profile of the Artist



Chapter-1

It is seldom that the greatness of an artist finds recognition in his own life time. Many creative artists have lived and passed away without achieving contemporary fame. But once in a while when the creative genius of an artist is discovered and recognized by his contemporaries, the aspirations, beliefs, convictions, values and their ideology become for the artist a directing and shaping influence. A true artist is always conscious of his responsibilities to society. He is always searching for new means, methods and techniques to reveal his unique and personal experiences and emotions to common people, as well as to the refined and cultivated. He knows that his creations should embody the intellectual and spiritual desires, aspirations and values of the community which he represents. If he fails in this endeavour, the springs of his creative energy will dry up. The development of his mind and art will be impeded.

The creative values of Chughtai's art arise from his own confidence in himself. From his earliest years he was sceptical of many of the trends of modern art and was suspicious of the quality of much that was being produced in studios of popular artists. Had he not resisted the temptation of following modern trends and had he not remained true to his own vision, and his means and methods, his art would have become barren and he would never have been able to assert and illustrate by his work how deep and remote are the origins of our own culture. Chughtai has a profound knowledge and understanding of our culture and all his work is informed by this knowledge and understanding.

It is more than half a century ago that Modern Indian Painting was born. Although the political influence of the foreigners played a part in its formation, it also had the sincerity and the distinctive potentialities of the Indian artists whose achievements were so formidable that the school of Modern Indian Art became the focus of attention of the world. It had its glorious traditions behind it to justify its name, and it acquired such a high place in the domain of art that the critics and the thinkers of Europe had to acknowledge its entity and individuality. It is more than twenty five years since Chughtai has been making contribution to the modern Art of the Indo-Pak

subcontinent and ever since he has stood beside his contemporaries for the enrichment of the art traditions of the country. But according to his own statement, he never had a moment's leisure to work in collaboration with these artists. He never found the time to go to Bengal for this purpose although he recognized with profound veneration the Bengal school of art. He has enriched the heritage of art and culture of his country through his sincere effort and his incessant struggle to realize his aspirations and, on innumerable occasions, his creative talents have received warm tributes of connoisseurs and art lovers. Before he achieved fame, his work received harsh criticism and he had to undergo many hardships. He fell a victim to narrow provincial prejudices, but he remained deeply absorbed in his own artistic pursuits and productions and subjected his potentialities to constructive effort in the face of hostile propaganda. This has earned him an undying name and the history of Modern Indian Art cannot be complete without a chapter on his achievements. Chughtai is the only artist of the Indo-Pak subcontinent whose works and style have raised so great a controversy and about whom so much has been written. Some think that Chughtai is an artist whose vision is inspired by the past. But those who are close to him and have studied his art fully believe that he is a progressive Modern artist, as a man he has all the qualities and characteristics of the twentieth century.

Chughtai aims at a new technique, a new style, a new vision and a new school. He has established an individual school of art which is called the Chughtai School and will ever be called so in future after his name. His name will ever remain boldly written in the annals of art history. The school that he has created with all his sincerity, will ever occupy an honorable place in the cultural heritage of mankind. He has created a style of his own out of the pictorial traditions which had well-nigh been forgotten for about two hundred years.

According to Chughtai, art whether Eastern or Western, which is cut off from its traditions, loses sight of its past and does not respond to the National aspirations and needs of contemporary society, has no future. His belief is that every movement that helps elevate man spiritually, morally or individually is valid and will outlast time. For thus it gives to humanity an extraordinary ecstasy, fullness of life and consolation. It is with devoted enthusiasm that the artist in the face of adversities, economic distress and the hypocrisy of friends and admirers confidently endeavours to check the decline and disintegration of humanity and lends

strength to a movement with the help of which may be determined the direction to the right path.

Chughtai has ever endeavored that his art should express his culture and should lend support to the visual standard of those in whose eyes the eastern art even to day is as glorious as any great art of the world. The history of Oriental art from Persia to India and from India to the far East proves its continuity, the centrality of which has raised its loftiness and has provided for it an opportunity to survive; and it is this continuity which is responsible for giving birth to Iqbal, Tagore and Chughtai. Chughtai is not desirous of becoming Gauguin, Van Gogh, Picasso, Rode or Barqui. He believes that the secret of our existence lies in the fulfillment of our own aspirations. Why should we not explore the possibilities in the works of our own artists like Behzad, Mirak, Raza Abbasi, Faruk Beg, Nadir-ul-Asar, Syed Mir Ali, Khwaja Abdus Samad Shirazi just as the Western artists have done in the search of their ideals to enhance the prestige of their art. And it is necessary that, in order to draw the attention of our people to the creed of art, we should recount the social order and conditions of our past artists and should

make use of the accruing similitude's and should cast our creative pattern in such moulds with which we wish to keep ourselves linked.

Chughtai's art has passed through various phases and in every period he has established his individuality. And up till now he has not given up his pencil and brush. It seems that the focus of his studies has been Iranian, Mughal, and Rajput painting. On being asked, Chughtai remarked that he felt that in comparison with the sincerity and the broadmindedness with which he had studied Western art, he had not yet even looked enough at the Eastern art. He said that in pursuance of his studies of Western art he surveyed every inch of Italy; he journeyed to every corner of Germany; he traveled throughout the length and breadth of France, and explored every corner of Great Britain; and to refresh his studies he went again to Europe. He claims that he has exerted all his talents to comprehend the modern abstract art and all that he has inferred is this, that the right path for the Oriental arts lies in its adherence to the Oriental tradition just as the salvation of the whole of the East lies in its Oriental tradition. He has depicted such characters as bear the characteristics of an eagle, such

dauntless, daring persons, such veteran holy warriors, and such lovely ladies who represents the glories of our culture and of our cultural values. His Etchings are a splendid contribution to our art and through this medium he has provided a memorable sustenance to our visual perception. It is a great achievement which has exerted its influence on the West which has recognized the technical qualities and the artistic virtues of his great Etchings. All critics of art and letters have recognised his individuality in Etching.

To day art of Chughtai and his pictorial creations have an international reputation. Chughtai and his art are the subject of reviews and assessments by leading art critical. His paintings adorn the renowned collections of the world. He has contributed to almost every great exhibition held anywhere. His paintings have been hung in the exhibition held in India, Poland, Holland, France, Germany, Russia, America and in the Royal Academy of London. In 1934 the British Government bestowed upon him the title of Khan Bahadur in recognition of his artistic talents. The Government of Pakistan honoured him with the title of Hilal-i-Imtiaz (the order of the Crescent of Merit). His characteristic, individual style,

his technique and his productions have been termed as Chughtai Art and Chughtai school. His art reflects a glory akin to that of art the of architecture and a fluidity and uprightness of calligraphy, and his lasting colours are like those of the crept which are the products of his own country and community.

Chughtai is an artist but he is also a great collector. His collection contains rare Iranian miniatures and manuscripts; and such miniatures of the Mughal and Kangra schools, which are not to be found not only anywhere else but are seldom to be found even in a vast country like India. Besides Persian, Mughal and Rajput miniatures, his collection also comprises are very rare.

Mohammad Abdul Rehman Chughtai' is a name ever echoing in the Indian Renaissance (early 20th century). one perceives this name possibly with a clearly defined reaction. One can look upon the name parenthetically as that of an Oriental artist, or one can be astonished at the legend in it. But very little is known about him by now for one reason or the other. Being a very modest personality, he put his art in the fore front and hid behind

it. But inspite of this, he had enough inner drive to take him ever to the fore without surrendering to the temptation of fixing his tent at some leisure place and stagnating in the safe pursuit of impersonation.

Chughtai's forefathers originally belonged to Herat (Iran) and settled in Lahore, with the shifting of cultural activity to Mughal India and made a significant contribution in the times of Mughal emperor Shahjahan (1618-1707) down to the times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1799-1839) when they enjoyed the royal patronage of the Sikh monarch. Ustad Ahmad (d. 1649) great grandson of ustad Abdal latif Al-qatib was the chief architect of the great Mughal Emperor Shahjahan and designer of such famous buildings as the Taj Mahal of Agra, Jama Masjid and the Red Fort of Delhi. His son Lutuf Ullah was also a poet and a great mathematician. Mohammed Salah Mimar (d. 1858), the great grandson of Lutuf Ullah (d. 1689) more commonly known as Baba Salah, was a famous architect of Lahore and was associated with the Punjab courts in the role of an engineer and treasurer. Mohammed Salah Mimar's two sons Elahi Bakhsh and Rahim Bakhsh, who were

famous architects of his times made a great contribution to the city of Lahore. Rahim Bakhsh had one son Karim Bakhsh and Abdul Rahman Chughtai was one of the four sons of Karim Bakhsh.

Mohammad Abdul Rehman Chughtai was born on September 21, 1897. His family was deeply religious and dominated the art scene before Ranjit Singh as also the period following his death. "The pictorial art thus runs through the veins of Chughtai, who out of some generic sentiment, resuscitates the old Persian mannerism in a flat romantic style of his own devising".

Abdul Rehman Chughtai was first sent to the Chiny-Wali Mosque in Lahore for religious learning in Arabic and there he learnt to read Quran. He had brief naggashi education at the Wazir Khan Mosque, Lahore from his uncle Baba Miran Bakhsh. Miran Bakhsh were two brothers who were known as Murtanwala portrait makers. The elder became headmaster of Municipal technical school of Amritsar while the younger joined the education department as a drawing master in Railway Technical School, Lahore but was later on transferred to Mayo School of Arts, Lahore.

Master Miran Bakhsh decorated the walls of viceregal Lodge (now Rashtrapati Bhawan) of New Delhi in the old arabesque style⁵. Baba Miran Bakhsh was not very enthusiastic about the idea of giving training to Chughtai as he found that mostly the oriental artists do not have the aptitude to bear the ineffectiveness of attempts to achieve perfection. But Chughtai was a different child and had the potentiality to explore his inner self from his very childhood. He worked very hard and brought his inner world of sensitivity on the paper through colours and lines⁶.

Later on, Chughtai was admitted to the Technical Railway School at Lahore to complete his middle school education. Being a very independent personality from the very beginning, he could not get along with the school atmosphere and at one time when he was in seventh class, he suddenly left the school and went to Sind, a province now in Pakistan, all by himself and stayed there with his relatives for sometime. However, his father forcibly brought him back and made him rejoin the school. To every body's surprise, he passed the middle school examination with first position in the Punjab in the year 1911⁷. Chughtai was the most sensitive child of the four brothers. The eldest was

Mohammad Hussain (d. 1946) and two younger ones Dr. Mohammad Abdullah and Abdur Rahim. Mohammad Hussain joined as a headmaster of Technical District Board school in Ludhiana in 1915. Dr. Mohammad Abdullah Chughtai was later on known as an eminent art-historian and archaeologist of Pre-partition India and outstanding scholar of art and culture in Pakistan and Abdur Rahim was an art lover. Chughtai felt more cordial in the company of his younger brothers and two first cousins Hassan din and Meraj Din.

Young Chughtai was told by his father, Mian Karim Baksh, the glories of many of their ancestors who were great artists, architects, poets, mathematicians and writers. Chughtai was also an owner of multi-dimensional personality. The artistic inclination which he inherited, was so strong that he could not resist any more and rebelled against his father's decision of making him an engineer. There was little sympathy for his decision to become an artist in his family. However, Chughtai was determined and ultimately joined Mayo School of Arts in Lahore

(Now Known as the National College of Arts) in October, 1911.

This school was started by the British in Lahore in 1872 to preserve the Arts and Crafts treasures of the Punjab. Lockwood Kipling, a teacher in sculpture was transferred to Lahore from the J. J. School of Arts (full name is Jamsethi Jeejeebhoy School of Arts).. Bombay to establish a new institution. This was a significant event for the people of Lahore¹⁰. Chughtai passed out from this institution with distinction in 1914, with second position in the Punjab. In between, Chughtai's marriage was settled and responsibilities of family life thrust upon him. He was hardly a teenager when he married Wazir-un-Nisa, who was only thirteen years old. Chughtai was too young to understand the problems of married life. A son was born but the child died at the time of birth. Thereafter, his wife could not bear a child due to her poor state of health'.

In 1913, Chughtai's father Mian Karim Bakhsh expired. This was a big blow to Abdul Rehman Chughtai and to the whole family. All the family affairs were in a middle. There was nobody else in the family who

could share the burden not even his elder brother who was absolutely unconcerned regarding his duties. But the determined young Chughtai faced the obstacles with great courage. In this hour of difficulty, his interest in photography helped him in earning some income for the family. Chughtai has himself said:

"due to my domestic and economic conditions, I became a photographer but left this profession at its height and decided to devote my life to painting". After passing out from the Mayo School of Art, Abdul Rehman Chughtai took up a job in the Mission High School in Gujranwala as a Drawing Master on a salary of Rupees thirty per month. But soon, he left the job and returned to his native place and went to Delhi and Agra on an excursion in 1916. The same year, he got teaching job in the newly created photolithography department of the school in the Mayo School of Art, on a request made by Chughtai to Lionel Heath, principal of the school. In the same year, Chughtai was sent to Calcutta by Lionel Heath for further training in the new techniques of Photo-lithography at the Calcutta Government Press and

there he came across many artists of Bengal school. Chughtai says,

"In the beginning, I had to go to Calcutta for some significant work. I thought I should meet the Bengali artists who contribute so much to Modern art, the more I got time, the more I met the artists and exchanged views with them".

In his short visit, he met some of the renowned artists like Abinindranath Tagore and his disciple Nand Lal Bose who have contributed a lot to the Renaissance Movement of Indian art. A.N. Tagore created a new spirit of inquiry and of experiment and bold innovation amongst the artists and this earned him the title of the "Father of Indian Painting". According to A.K. Coomaraswami, "Tagore presented the Indian soul before the world by his sharp intellect, as he was a creative and talented genius artist".

In Calcutta, Chughtai also came in contact with Ustad Hussain Bakhsh, a painter and a flourishing stage designer of a theatrical company in Calcutta. There he also met Ustad Mohammed Din and S.G. Thakur Singh, the pupils of Ustad Hussain Bakhsh of

Amritsar, whom Chughtai knew earlier". Mohammed Din has his earlier education from Mayo School of Art, Lahore in 1990 and S.G. Thakur Singh later on became a founder member of Indian Academy of fine Arts, Amritsar¹⁶. Amritsar is about 40 Kilometers away from Lahore and before partition in 1947, the people could make frequent visits to these two cities.

Chughtai was sent to Calcutta to get training in photolithography, but he returned home with greater involvement in painting than lithography. His visit to Calcutta made him more enthusiastic and vigorous. On his return, he worked on the style of Bengal school and sent one of his works to be published in the news based journal *Modern Review* in 1917¹⁷ and thereafter his paintings were reproduced in the following years upto 1920 in *modern review*, *Rupam*¹⁸ and in *Koopa Lekha*¹⁹ in 1920s and 1930s.

The Editor of *Modern Review*, Ramanendra Chatterjee published a series of albums, in which he included Chughtai's paintings in all the six volumes. The album also included the paintings of Abanindernath Tagore and his pupils. Through these reproduction in many magazines and

journals, his works were largely known all over India particularly in Calcutta. His frequent visits to Calcutta associated him with the Bengal school Movement.

The politics of this period was polarized between Calcutta and Bombay School of Arts. J.J. School of Arts, Bombay was following the European techniques while Calcutta School, later on Known as Bengal School of Art headed by E.B. Havell and other artists like Abanindernath Tagore and Nand Lal Bose did not encourage the pure European wash technique but added traditional flavour to it. Thus their style became quite Indian in Character.

In the Catalogue of the Centenary celebrations of National College of Arts, Lahore, it is mentioned that Abdul Rehman Chughtai was one of Gupta's painting students. But Chughtai's son Arif Straightway discarded this claim of Chughtai being a student of S.B. Gupta²⁰. Chughtai also did not wish to acknowledge that he himself was any way associated with Bengal School but the reflection of Bengal School technique in his earlier works cannot be denied. But he indirectly mentioned in 'My Painting'.

"Under these circumstances no one else had any chance of establishing himself apart from the Bengal School". During that period, the wave of Bengal school was so intense that young Chughtai was also swept away by this lusty trend. Chughtai recalled the meeting when S.B. Gupta introduced him to Abanindernath Tagore at Calcutta where Tagore commented about Chughtai. "He is our enlightened friend. We are visualizing the possibilities of promotion of art in the Punjab through Abdul Rehman Chughtai". This remark how Tagore perhaps bothered S.B. Gupta who probably thought of himself as a promoter of Bengal School in the Punjab. Moreover, the increasing recognition of Chughtai in the Exhibition of British and Indian Arts and Crafts Lahore, 1920 apparently made him his rival.

Chughtai had adopted certain mannerism and stylization in his paintings and developed his own style. He used architectural Persian motifs and Muslim subjects apart from the Hindu themes as a result of himself study. Thus the outcome was very expressive and original. Chughtai compared his works to that of Bengal School and wrote:

"The Bengal School of art represented Gods and goddesses, Shiva and Parvati. It was full of melancholy and despair, naturally my artistic aptitude and views were radically different. My style and subject matter was different"²².

Many artists from Bengal School participated in the Exhibition of British and Indian Arts and Crafts, 1920 and about three hundred paintings were entertained for the exhibition. Young Chughtai's works were highly appreciated and got tremendous publicity. "His unique and fresh outlook impressed one and all"²³. The response was so encouraging that all the members of his family started realizing that a true artist had been born again in their family who had the dimensions of visualizing ingenious and original views and to translate them into form and colour.

In 1924, his works were selected for the British Empire Exhibition, Wembley, England with works of other artists from Bengal and Punjab like those of Mian Inayat Ullah, Mohammed Hussain Qadri and A.R. Ashgar. They all were his associates and friends. Chughtai was the sole artist whose maximum number of paintings, that is eight paintings, were accepted for the

exhibition whereas only six paintings, of Gupta who participated from Bengal, could get entry. This again created hostility between them.

Abdullah wrote that from the very beginning, Chughtai disliked Gupta as a person as well as his work and he further recalled the incident which could be one of the reasons of Chughtai's resignation. Abdullah mentioned that Chughtai prepared paintings for the Wembley Exhibition at home and he took sick leave during this period from the Mayo School pretending being ill and after working whole day, he went to see the movies in the evenings. One evening, Chughtai came across S.N. Das Gupta, and Assistant Principal in empire Cinema Hall who had also come to see the movie. So, Gupta reported this matter to higher authorities mentioning that Chughtai was not sick but was found seeing movies in the evenings. On this Chughtai was asked to clarify but Chughtai paid no attention to it and never went to the school thereafter".

So the year 1924 was a turning point in the life of Chughtai. He also knew that the charges put against him were due to Gupta's personal jealousy. This incited Chughtai to take a severe decision of resigning from the post

of an art instructor. So, he bade farewell to Mayo School of Art for ever. Thereafter, he started his career as an independent artist and committed himself totally to his creative ventures. This resignation proved to be a blessing in disguise.

He started participating in the All India Exhibitions and his paintings were adjudged winners over and over again in various exhibitions." This was a major break through of his career and after that he never looked back. In 1921, he was awarded cash prize of Rs. Fifty for a painting on Historical or religious subject, The Passing of Shahjahan. His paintings were adjudged best in Mussoorie fine Arts Exhibition and got the award for three years consecutively from 1921 to 1923. Strugglers of the world (1921), Passing of Shahjahan (1922) and Omar and his Sagi (1923). He was felicitated with two other awards, one from Punjab Fine Arts Society, Lahore and another from Bombay Art Society, Bombay in 1923. Madras fine Arts society also awarded him bronze medal for his painting at 40th Annual Exhibition in 1924.

Before shifting to his new house in 1938 at Ravi Road, Chughtai lived in his ancestral house at Mohalla Chabuk Swaran which was located in Walled city of Lahore. This house was a common meeting place for his artist friends, intellectuals, poets and story writers. They enjoyed having long discussions on various artistic subjects for many hours. Chughtai was a great admirer of Dr. Mohammad Allama Iqbal who was an established poet and philosopher of great depth, whom Chughtai respected the most. Dr. Mohammad Din Taseer, a noted poet, writer and literature and a promising pupil of Dr. Iqbal, was also a keen enthusiast of Chughtai³³ whom he met first time in the office of Nairang-e-Khayyat in 1925. Later on, more joined their company. They were kartar Singh Sumer, a painter and a writer, Sujan Singh, Punjabi story writer, Bawa Balwant, a writer, Ghulam Abbas, Rajinder Singh Bedi, Pritam Singh Saeer, Reld, Judge Supreme Court, who later in their lives earned fame in their respective fields were also Chughtai's friends who had spent lots of time together enjoying and discussing art. Chughtai recounts the mood of those meetings in one of his letters written in Urdu to his friend Sumer who migrated to Karnal after the partition.

"I remember the good old days when we used to enjoy and laugh during our get together in Amritsar"²⁵.

Ghulam Abbas described that "the idea of publishing Chughtai's maiden book Muragga-i-Chughtai was conceived during these meetings only".

It was just a matter of chance that Dr. M.D. Taseer and Chughtai's younger brother Rahim were watching the works of Chughtai when Taseer mentioned about the similarities between poet Mirza Ghalib's couplets and theme of Chughtai's paintings"²⁶. It was at that very moment that Chughtai thought of painting "Ghalib". Chughtai gave the shape to his fantasy and wanted to see them in a book form. Chughtai was desperately looking for some patron who could finance him for publishing the book. At this time, Chughtai approached G. Venkatachalam, a trusted friend and an art critic and author of many books on art for the publication of the book. Chughtai wrote to him if he could introduce him to some prince or millionaire who would be interested to buy a fine set of his twenty paintings and allow him to reproduce them in a book on Ghalib.

Venkatachalam persuaded Her Highness, the Maharani of Cooch - Bihar to see where he had representative collection of Chughtai's pictures at one exhibition at Bangalore and buy his paintings. She appreciated the works of Chughtai and expressed her desire to have some of them for her personal collections. G. Venkatachalam tactfully told her of Chughtai's intentions of reproducing them in a suitable book form. She was non committed at first but visited the exhibition twice, all the time devoting her attention to Chughtai's paintings. She finally accepted and sent her private secretary Major Khusru Jung to settle the affairs³⁹. She contributed between ten to fifteen thousand rupees for the publication of the book in return for acquiring a number of the original paintings for her private collections. The work was started immediately after getting the positive reply. Dr. Taseer helped Chughtai in selecting the paintings for the book. Chughtai and Taseer consulted Dr. Allama Iqbal and other scholars regarding Ghalib's poetry. The illustrations were sent to England for printing to get the best results. The reproductions were as good as the original paintings. The designing, printing and the binding of the book was done by Chughtai himself and his brother Rahim, though he had

been helped by Taseer for proof reading which is one of the important factors in publishing a book. Ultimately, the dreams took the shape of reality and the superb illustrated edition of the book *Muraqqa-I-Chughtai* was finally brought out in 1928 by Jehangir Book club, the publishing house that Chughtai had founded for the purpose of printing. The book contains the *Diwan* of Ghalib. The paintings were captioned giving verses from Ghalib's couplets.

The first copy of the *Muraqqa* was laid to the *Mazar* of Mirza Ghalib at Delhi and the second copy was presented to the Nizam of Hyderabad who appreciated the artistic effort that had gone into the making of it. Dr. James Cousin did the introduction and Dr. Allama Iqbal wrote the foreword and described it as "Unique enterprise n Modern Indian painting and Printing".

The book *Muraqqa-I-Chughtai* was publicized and promoted by his friend Hakim Mohammed Yusuf Hassan in his popular magazine *Mairang-I-Khayyal*" (pt. 277). This created a revolution in book illustrations, publication and printing. He got tremendous applause and appreciation as it reached to almost all the

cultural centres of the country. The leading art magazines of the world carried the reviews in their columns²³. In view of some of the art critics, he only matched couplets to his already painted paintings. Others say that Chughtai was no more than an illustrator.

It looks that some of the paintings of *Muraqqa-i-Chughtai* were just matched and some of them were executed after having read Ghalib.

In 1929, Dr. Abanindra Nath Tagore wrote to Chughtai on receiving a copy of the *Muraqqa-i-Chughtai*. "Your splendid and beautiful illustration and illumination have done justice to the memory of the departed poet (plate FV).

Chughtai's only motivation in the publication of that book was to mirror and propagate that part of Asian Culture of which Mirza Ghalib (19th century) was the leader and to which he wanted to give anew lease of life²⁴. "Faultless reproduction" was the verdict of great art critic Roger Fry and E.B. Havell wrote "your book is a great achievement".

In early 1930s Chughtai wanted to go to Europe to get himself acquainted with the new trends and techniques

which were emerging fast in the West. Finally, in May 1932, Chughtai along with his brother Abdullah embarked upon his first trip to England.

In London, he tried his hand in different materials and the art of etching attracted him most as he new the basis of this technique. In India, he had been doing litho and engraving work at Mayo School of Arts, Lahore in 1918. Abdul Rehman first got lessons in etching in London in 1931 from the renowned etcher smart. After his return to India, he had to discontinue this medium because of the non availability of the tools. Chughtai, after returning from Europe, went forward to a full utilization of the media giving a touch of oriental traditions. He tried his hand on large size plates and excelled in the medium.

Chughtai's two paintings Shah Jahan and A Mughal Princess got selected for the Exhibition but due to lack of space only A Mughal Princess could be displayed Chughtai took to etching with enthusiasm as a delicate but powerful medium of expression. The etching of Rembrandt left a deep imprint in his mind.

Chughtai returned home as a more mature artist. He acquired what was needed for the enrichment of his style.

Being Persian by heredity, the touch of western style blended more smoothly with the formal decorative lyricism of the Mughal traditions which showed the novelty in his style and that could be called as "Chughtai School of Art".

During this period Chughtai also conceived the idea of bringing out his own literary art journal in which he could produce and print his own writings and paintings without taking obligation from other publishers who created lot of fuss and thus Caravan was published in 1939 with the help of his friend, M.D. Taseer who edited the first issue of this journal.

Chughtai was fascinated by Ajanta paintings. So, Abdullah, his brother and he himself made a trip to the south and Visited Hyderabad and after that they went to see the Ajanta frescoes. There, they spent a few days watching closely the gracious figures of Ajanta and Admiring sublime beauty in the form of colour and line.

After having seen the cave paintings of Ajanta, both the brothers went to Banaras on their way to Calcutta where they wanted to attend the exhibition of Bengal School artists which were arranged by the

"Indian society of Oriental Arts". Calcutta. Chughtai did not want to miss the opportunity of seeing the works of the artists of Bengal school together at one place. In the meantime, his energy was directed towards publication of his other book. It was "Chughtai's paintings". This was his third book published in 1940. The first edition of *Naqqash-i-Chughtai* came out in 1934, another illustrated divan of Mirza Ghalib and more or less had the same approach like that of *Muraqqa-i-Chughtai* published in his own press. This book revealed some of his personal attitudes about art and provided some stylistic data. *Naqqash-i-Chughtai* was reprinted many times and a few paintings was published in 1970 which has thirty six colour plates and four monochrome reproductions. The introduction and critical annotations for each plate was written by Mrs. Razia-Siraj ud-Din, a cultural and literary personality of Pakistan. The foreword written by Dr. James. H. Cousine for *Muraqqa-i-Chughtai* was later on transcribed in Chughtai's paintings.

Though Chughtai was very sober, polite and friendly, he got himself involved in the creative aspect of life so deeply that he could not spare time to socialize. He wrote, "I

have developed a full artistic consciousness and realized my duty as an artist. I have felt man's acute need for art³⁹.

Apart from painting, he also designed posters, dust jackets and illustrations for books. He also designed the dust cover of the biography of Jacqueline Kennedy then wife of John F. Kennedy, President of the United States of America which was appreciated all over and Chughtai received a note of appreciation from the first lady of United States.

In 1938, Chughtai and his family shifted from the traditional residence of Coocha chabuk Sawaran situated in the congested walled area of old Lahore to the newly constructed present house on Ravi Road, Lahore⁴⁰. This house was away from the maddening crowd of chabuk Sawaran and was comparatively quiet and secluded which Chughtai desperately wanted for the sake of creative work. In this house, Chughtai had peace of mind and he kept working all the time in his second floor studio. Even his close friends were not entertained while he was busy in paintings and were told by Chughtai himself, "I am not at home", and his friends also always took it lightly.

Chughtai was also disturbed due to the fact that he could not have any issue from his first wife, so he married another girl Kishwar Ara, who belonged to a Kashmiri family. The marriage ceremony took place at Amritsar. In 1946, a daughter was born whom Chughtai named Mussarat Jehan Ara (Meaning happiness). In 1949, She gave birth to a son whom they named Arif Rehman. Chughtai had to wait for almost three decades to get his desire of having his own children fulfilled. Wazir-un-Nisa lived as an elder mother of the children till her death. She was given full respect in the house and every one used to call her "Ama Dode".

In 1947, he went to Hyderabad and held his last exhibition in India. By this time, Chughtai had established himself as one of the most successful artists of India whose work, people used to buy and they liked to copy his style. He stayed there for a month and there he gave a demonstration on wash technique to the students of Fine Arts College⁹⁹. At that time, many of his paintings were bought by the government for the permanent collection of the museum. Thirty six paintings are still with the same Archaeological museum, Hyderabad.

B

The political turmoil took another turn though India became independent on August 15, 1947 it was divided into two countries. The partition of India gave birth to Pakistan. Hindus migrated to India and Indian Muslims had gone to East and West Pakistan for the safety of their lives. Hindu, Muslims and Sikhs who used to live together and fought collectively for the freedom had started attacking one another and murdering ruthlessly resulting in destruction, deaths and sufferings. The communal riots spread all over and the old city of Lahore was burning with hatred. The senseless murder of humanity aggrieved the sensitive heart of the artist.

At the time of the partition, Chughtai's art was at its height. Being the only famous artist of this new born Islamic nation called 'Pakistan', he was asked to design a series of stamps and on the personal request of the Quaid-e-Azam, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, through Liaquat Ali Khan, he was asked to submit the designs for the flag of this young independent nation. Due to over decoration of the motif, the design could not be adopted. However, the CROSSENT AND STAR was accepted. The insignia was approved for a letter-head used

by the Government of Pakistan. He also designed the stamps (pl. 275) and the emblems for Radio Pakistan and Pakistan Television corporation. One of his water colours, "The Star", was reproduced by U.N.C.E.F for its Greeting Card.

Amrita Sher-Gill was a progressive artist who had come from Europe to India in 1934 and lived in Lahore for sometime. Though she died very early at the age of 29 in 1941. She propounded a new style of painting with the amalgamation of Western Modern Art with that of Indian art which influenced the entire region. But Chughtai being traditional in his approach somehow could not cope with the new trends and remained oriental in style throughout his life.

"It is true that the senior artists of Pakistan continued to paint and produce original work, particularly Chughtai who has been unusually active and productive in recent years. But their work and style have not changed very much, and are almost dated, standing apart from the main current of 'Contemporary' Pakistani painting as it has surged in several new directions during the years since 1947".

The name of the institution Alhamra Arts council was proposed by Chughtai and was accepted with little amendment suggested by Dr. Jaseer and it was named Alhamra Pakistan Arts Council

The first ever exhibition of Chughtai, after the partition was held on the occasion of the inaugural function of Alhamra institution. This was the first cultural event held in Lahore and the function was inaugurated by Pakistan's second governor General Khawaja Nazimuddin. It was such a big show that Dr. M.D. Jaseer wrote an introduction to the catalogue:

"The Pakistan Arts Council is exhibiting about two hundred paintings of Chughtai. This exhibition is a landmark in the cultural history of Asia. Never before in our life time has there been such a display of significant artistic production by one oriental artist. Chughtai's rich personality, his affluent creativeness are evident from the varied range of style and genre. And even when he is derivative, he is distinct himself. It was this artistic uniqueness, his integrity of personality, this self-hood of painterly vision which made Iqbal say twenty years ago that "Some of Chughtai's more recent paintings are indeed

remarkable". Iqbal noted in Chughtai the signs of "the soul movement of the ideal artist in whom love reveals itself as a thing of Beauty and Power". He saw "life - quality" in Chughtai".

The Government sponsored another exhibition of Chughtai's work in Karachi in 1951. The governor-General, Mr. Ghulam Mohammad inaugurated the show and made a remark, without mentioning the name, which disappointed Chughtai and all who are present at the function when he said "it is time that our artists stop looking backward and digging up the buried past. We want the artists to move with the times, interpret the living present and paint the world around them".

In this exhibition, Chughtai displayed his various types of work which included water colours, etchings, drawings for the first time in Pakistan which shocked many.

Chughtai spent his later life in Lahore but his contribution to India could never be forgotten. In 1951, Dhoomi Mal Dharam Das published a book on Chughtai's work titled "Chughtai's Indian Paintings. Ten paintings of the total reproduced in this book are in the collection of National Gallery of Modern Art,

New Delhi which honoured Chughtai by providing a full section to his paintings.

"Art has no barrier". This view was represented by Chughtai in his introductory message carried in Chughtai's Indian paintings. He further wrote "the Only aim of art is that life should thrive. My art is living and will continue to throb with life. I have painted about 200 pictures on Indian motifs. This background of my art should not be lost sight of"²⁰.

One review in *The Hindustan Times*, *Introducing an Artist*, stated that "Looking at these pictures nobody is likely to be spellbound by their languorous sweetness and by the magic of their composition except perhaps romantic teenagers who go in for art with a capital A."

Another reviewer for the *Statesman* stated "much of his (Chughtai's) drawing and colours show the influence of the Bengal School at its worst and added, (Chughtai's colour, indeed is almost always marred by errors of taste"²².

Before the partition, Chughtai was very popular amongst masses concerning his Buddhist and Hindu subjects. His paintings related to Indian mythology and culture were bought by wealthy people of India. But after

the partition of this sub-continent, the transaction of any kind between Pakistan and India became prohibited and so were his paintings. But after few years the restrictions were relaxed and so Chughtai and his brother Rahim paid visits to Amritsar, Chandigarh, Delhi and Agra.

He was felicitated by the President's Pride of Performance award in 1958 while his fellow artist friend Allaha Bukhsh was given the award of Tamgha-e-Imtiaz by the President.

He was also referred as a National Artist of Pakistan. He was honoured by the visit paid by then President Mohammad Ayub Khan to his Ravi Road Studio at Lahore in 1959. The Government of Pakistan adored Chughtai with another title Hilal-I-Imtiaz. (The order of the Crescent o. merit) in 1959 presented by the president. Chughtai was the first artist to be honoured in Pakistan for the contribution in the field of art and culture.

Chughtai painted six black and white illustrations exclusively for the book Safar which was based on the tragedy of partition of Indian sub-continent in 1947 and was written by Justice S.A. Rahman and Published

in 1964. Chughtai painted seven paintings for the book but only six illustrations were printed.

The long awaited concept of illustrating Allama Iqbal's philosophy and completing it in the form of a book was at last realized. After many years of preparation, this book finally appeared in the market with the title *Amal-e-Chughtai* in Urdu, and *Iqbal: Poet of the East* in English in 1968. Chughtai wrote, "This is the outcome of his continuous, hard labour extending over not less than fifteen years"²⁸. Abdullah recalled the incident mentioned in *Art and Personality*. "Chughtai and myself went first time in 1921 to Iqbal's Anarkali house to show the review of Dr. Nicholson by E.M. Forster carried out in London based weekly paper named *anthem* and Iqbal was too glad to see this. There Iqbal showed his keenness to see Chughtai's paintings and thereafter many meetings were held and the idea of painting the philosophy and poetry of Iqbal started taking shape which was realized almost after four decades in 1968"²⁹. *IT* was a big volume having two hundred and thirty five pages in all with thirty seven coloured and twenty one black and white reproductions of his paintings and five prints of etchings. Short explanations of

each illustration were given in English and the text in Urdu. The linear design on each page created by Chughtai himself enriched the content of the book.

"It is the beauty allied with power in Iqbal's poetry that has impelled Chughtai's gifted brush to transmute his ideas into his inimitable combination of colours and lines that, in the words of Dr. James H. Cousins, "Seem to be less lines of painting than of some inaudible poetry made visible. His sensitivity and the quality of pictorial lyricism that characterize his paintings, have already assured that Artist a niche in the Temple of Fame and I feel sure that the Warmth of imaginative truth that he has offered us in the volume will endure in the coffers of Time".

It was a very expensive venture and once again this book *Amal-e-Chughtai* brought revolution in book printing and publication, and provided historical as well as biographical chronology. Three lakh rupees had been spent on the project. Though the Government sanctioned two laks for the publication and promised to release the amount soon but delay occurred somehow or the other and due to the change in Government set up in 1968, he was given only the merge amount of Rs. 50,000 - only. A lot of money and

time was wasted because the calligraphy of the manuscript could not be read by the European publishing house and it was sent to Pakistan again for the corrections but the formalities in the customs proved to be a costly affair for which Chughtai had to pay⁸¹.

Arif Chughtai stated that Chughtai painted many paintings for commercial purpose because the money was required to publish the big volume *Amal-e-Chughtai* dedicated to Iqbal "who was a versatile genius and a vivacious conversationalist with an encyclopedic mind, who has left us volumes of exquisite verse, that ensure him a place among the immortals of literature, besides the records of his charming conversations". Once, the book was published, he put restraint on selling his works and mostly the prints he put forth for sale in his solo shows⁸².

Chughtai's tremendous growth in the field of art is incontrovertible which is apparent in *Amal-e-Chughtai*. A.S. Rahman wrote in the introduction "when Chughtai was only 29, he brought out a superbly illustrated edition of the *Divan* of the famous Urdu Poet, Ghalib, and named it '*Muraqqa-I-Chughtai*'. Iqbal contributed a foreword to that publication and described it as 'a unique enterprise in

modern Indian painting and printing". Now that the Artist and his art have both reached maturity, he has conjured up the practical idealism of Iqbal by the magic of his brush, in what bids fair to be his 'Magnum Opus'.

Chughtai also had a passion for painting the quatrains of Omar Khayyam⁸⁵. From 1916 onwards, he painted this subject and created a number of paintings. He wanted to bring out an illustrated volume on Omar Khayyam as early as in 1933. This he mentioned in *Caravan*, "I also want to bring out a special edition of Omar Khayyam. It is ready for the press and would truly represent a marriage of Persian and Mughal Art" But this project had to be abandoned in order to give priority to illustrate Iqbal's verses. His long awaited dream of publishing a book based on the quatrains of Omar Khayyam did not take shape in his life time for one reason or the other⁸⁷. In his letter to Sumer.. Rahim, Chughtai wrote, "He wished to publish two to three books based on the theme of Omar Khayyam and now the edition of Omar Khayyam is ready in all aspects".

Chughtai was also a passionate art collector. He had about three hundred original Persian, Mughal and

Kangra paintings and also woodcuts by Utamaro and Hokusai. His collection also comprises a very rare and fine collection of Muslim calligraphy from 14th to 19th century and original etchings and engravings of great European masters of 14th to 16th century.."

Chughtai was a fine draftsman whose energetic and forceful lines fabricate the superfluous oriental motifs. He developed the skill of draftsmanship consciously and perfected it after years of hard labour. The calligraphy of the letters, illustrated in the motifs reproduced mastery in the execution of oriental designs. His exhilarating decorative patterns and oriental motifs simply highlight the personal symbolism.

Besides being an artist, an art collector, calligraphist and a draftsman, Chughtai was also a writer who wrote more than 150 stories, poems, and various articles on art and its history. His writings were published in books, literary art journals and magazines.

Chughtai wanted to establish a museum of his own but lack of resources hindered the realization of his desire during his life time. Chughtai mentioned, "I want a museum to be set up in Lahore for preserving my works, it cannot just be a small building and none of the prevailing

museums will do, for there are not 10 or 12 paintings, but over a thousand, out of which a few are not viewed by anyone. I have retained them safely for fifty or sixty years. There should be a separate building for them..”.

In the last few years when he was very ill, his close associate Faiz Ahmad, Faiz tried his best to secure funds from the Government but the unresponsive attitude of government officials, towards the artist who dedicated his whole life for the nation and for art, failed his life time ambition of having his own museum. Faiz was given a set pattern of reply asking him to first procure the works from Chughtai which he had promised and had never given to the Government”. This was again delayed without any specific reason.

Arif Chughtai recounted that his father even planed to set up a museum as early as in 1931 but only in 1961, he could purchase the property in the Garden town, far away from the hustle and bustle of the old city area but due to some unexpected barriers of law and financial strains, it could not be launched within the span of his life.

Towards the end of his life, Chughtai gathered criticism of not having kept pace with the modern trends and

was a heart broken man but not dejected. But a few of his associates supported him in one way or the other.

Articles were also published in Lahore and Karachi, bringing to light a controversy over Chughtai's modernity and status in Pakistan.

Even if his style was being criticized of being traditional and static, his works were in demand.

Chughtai remained very active throughout his life but the last two years of his life were full of ailments. In spite of his decaying state of health, Chughtai wrote to Faiz Ahmad Faiz, "I have not been well for the past two years, but I propose to hold an exhibition of my paintings on Omar Khayyam on March 3, 1975. The Government should extend a helping hand", but he never lived to that date to see his last wish fulfilled. He breathed his last on January 7, 1975 in the Chabuk Sawaran residence. A multi dimensional personality leaving behind an unforgettable legacy of paintings which perhaps none else could perform in his momentous style as he did, he left behind no followers. He was buried according to Muslim rites in Mian Shaib Graveyard in Lahore. The prayers for the deceased at Mian Sahib Mosque were offered

by a large number of people of all sections of the society. Various leading newspapers of India and Pakistan and Radio carried news of his death and condolence meetings and gatherings were held at Karachi and Lahore.

He was not given the respect which a personality of such calibre deserved.

Abdur Rahman, Chughtai's younger brother wrote to Sumer that "All India Radio gave much more coverage to this event than Pakistan Radio. Hindustan (India) considered him Modern Indian artist and History of Modern Indian art will be incomplete without incorporating his name. Tagore had also written a poem on the art of Chughtai. He has left unlimited complete and incomplete paintings behind him. Not only in India or in Pakistan but all over the world, the death was condoled. Walter Scheel, Former President of Federal Republic of Germany, 1975 sent his message to the bereaved family. "Please accept my sincerest condolence on the sad news of his death. For in the artist A.R. Chughtai, we have lost a great master whose importance was appreciated far beyond the sub-continent of his residence.

His work will not be forgotten by the world and his contributions ever appreciated."

Indira Gandhi, then Prime Minister of India wrote to his son, Arif Chughtai, "I am deeply grieved to learn that your father, Abdul Rahman Chughtai is no more. He was a great painter, one of the most celebrated figures of our artistic renaissance and he has enhanced the cultural traditions of our region. My condolence to you and other members of your family in your sorrow".

Though territory and material possession are divided but art, culture and tradition are indivisible. Artists belong to humanity as a whole. Abdul Rehman Chughtai has consistently endeavored to realize one aim: Portrayal of the joy and beauty of India's wonderfully rich composite and variegated life as seen through the eye of a poet-artist, who has identified himself with all the aspects of this and who has sought to rise above all difference of race and creed.

Foot notes

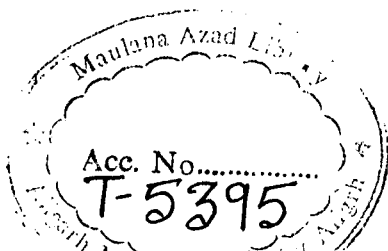
1. His name is spelled in different manner like Mohammad Abdur Rahman Chughtai, Abdul Rehman Chughtai. But generally he is known as Chughtai.
2. The year of Chughtai's birth does not seem to be accurate because his younger brother Abdullah who was two years Junior to him was born around 1896. But the year 1897 was mentioned in Chughtai's school certificate which was ascribed by his father and so 1897 will be taken as his birth year.
3. Manohar Kaul, "Muhammad Abdur Rehman Chughtai" Trends in Indian Painting, (Delhi: Dhoomimal Ramchand, 1961), p.122
4. Arif Chughtai, "Abdur Rehman Chughtai", Artist of the East, (Lahore: Nisar Art Press, Ltd. 1978). P.1.
5. R.P. Sivastava, "Patrons and Artist", Punjab Painting, (Delhi: Abhinav publication, 1983), p.45.

6. *The correspondence with Arif Chughtai son of Abdul Rehman Chughtai. Director Chughtai Museum trust Lahore, Pakistan.*
7. *Personal communication with Arif.*
8. *Arif, Chughtai. Artist of the East, p.3.*
9. *Art and Style by Pramila Luthra, p.37-38.*
10. *"Lahore's Painting Tradition". Alhamra Art Gallery. A catalogue was brought out on the occasion of the inauguration of Alhamra Art Gallery, Lahore on Aug. 14, 1984. (Lahore: Print House, 1984).*
11. *Arif, Chughtai. Artist of the East, p.7.*
12. *This reference was made by Abdul Rehman Chughtai in his letter to Saleem Akhtar dated March 11, 1971.*
13. *Chughtai, Foreword. Lagan (lahore: Mohan Singh Parydara Publishers, 1941), p.59.*
14. *L.C. Sharma, "Renaissance: Shri Abandranath Tagore". A brief History of Indian Painting. (Meerut: Goel Publishing House, 1984), p. 147.*

15. Abdullha, *"The Chughtai School of Painting"*,
Abdur Rehman Chughtai: Personality and Art,
 p.246.
16. Jaya Apasamy. G.S. Thakur Singh, New
 Delhi: Lalit Kala Akademi, 1967) pp. 1-11.
17. *Modern Review* was a monthly new oriented
 journal which was published from Calcutta. Chughtai
 sent his picture in 1916 and published in 1917 and
 thereafter in Feb. 1917, Sept. 1918, Sept. 1919 & 1920,
 which made Chughtai very popular.
18. The Editor or Rupam O.C. Ganguly was a dear
 friend of Abanindranath Tagore, who acknowledged
 the associates of Bengal school by reproducing
 Chughtai's painting in his journal.
19. *Roop- Lekha* was also a bio-annual illustrated
 journal ofn Art and Crafts Published By All
 India Fine Arts and Crafts Society, New
 Delhi, Since 1928.
20. Manohar Kaul. *Trends in Indian painting*,
 p.122.

21. P.R. Ramchandra Rao. "Bengal School : Abanindranath Tagore". *Modern Indian Painting* (Madras: Rachana, 1953), p.15.
22. Abdullah Chughtai. "A century of painting in the Punjab: 1849-1949". (Lahore: Kitab Khana-I-Mauras, 1961), p.47.
23. "S.N. Gupta carried the impulse of the Bengal School to far away Lahore. He was interested in Lyrical compositions where light and sources of light had a curious jewel like quality, as in the work of George de la Tour, and he passed on this preference to A.R. Chughtai", mentioned in "Bengal Renaissance", *Indian Art through the ages*, (New Delhi: the publications Division, Ministry of information of Broadcasting, Government of India, 1948), resp. 1951, p.43.
24. Chughtai. "My paintings as I see them". Even Jaya Appasamy wrote: "Abdul Rehman Chughtai is one of the outstanding painters of the Bengal school", p.68.

25. *Commentary for Temptation, a painting reproduced in Amal-e-Chughtai. (Lahore: Nisar Art Press, 1968), n.p.*
26. *Chughtai, Lagan, p.59.*
27. *Chughtai, "My paintings".*
28. *"It was the work of Chughtai was impressed everyone and newspapers published reviews appreciating his works". Mentioned Abdullah Chughtai, "The Chughtai school of Painting". Abdur Rehman Chughtai: Personality and Art, p. 247.*
29. *Inayat Ullah joined painting classes of S.B. Gupta in 1922 and the style of his painting was very similar to that of Chughtai and only on closer look one can find the difference. One of his paintings entitled Diwali adores the wall of National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi.*
30. *Abdullah, Chughtai, Personality and Art, p.245.*
31. *Communicant with S.L. Prashar, an old artist friend of Chughtai and was residing in Delhi at the time of interview in July, 1985. Also the catalogues*



- of Exhibitions preserved with Chughtai Museum Trust, Lahore are evident of his achievements.*
32. *Bombay art society. Bombay brought out a brochure in connection with the centenary celebrations of the society in 1989 in which Master's works were reproduced who were felicitated with the awards of the society in their times.*
33. *Abdullah, p. 285.*
34. *Probably Iswar Chitrakar was the only artist who was wholly successful in emulating the style of my art". These impressions Chughtai conceded in this letter to Sumer dated Oct. 30, 1969 after learning the death of his artist friend Ishwar Chitrakar who passed away in London in 1968.*
35. *Letter form Chughtai to Sumer date July 20, 1953.*
36. *A conversation between Ghulam Abbas and Agaha Abdul Hameed recorded in "Some Reminiscences". Abdur Rehman Chughtai: Personality and Art, p.1.*
37. *Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p.4.*

38. G. Venkatachalam, *'My contemporaries'*. (Bombay, Kanga 1966). P. 230. This book was published in connection with the authors 75th birthday on March 9, 1966. "He wrote 'My visit to Chughtai that year was in a sense to celebrate the occasion of the birth of this book'".
39. *Ibid.* P. 231.
40. Arif Chughtai, *Artist of the East*, p.4.
41. *Nairang-I-Khayyal* was a magazine published for Lahore and its editor Hakim Mohammad Yusuf Hassan was Chughtai's friend who provided a space in his magazine to advertise about his book *Muraqqa-I-Chughtai*. Harbhajan Singh, a publisher and an antique dealer in Amritsar told me this during the conversation on July 4, 1986, who was editor's friend and was an admirer of Chughtai's Art and was a buyer too.
42. Arif Chughtai, *Artist of the East*, p. 5.
43. *Ibid.* p.5.
44. G. Venkatachalam, *My contemporaries*, p.231.

45. In 1907, E.B. Havell and Gaganandranath Thakur founded the Indian Society of Oriental Arts, Calcutta, whose aim was to encourage traditional art of painting. There were 30 Britishers and 5 Indian in this organization and the Director was Lord Kitchner. "of great personal charm and dignified refinement Gaganedranath Tagore cast an enduring spell; the Indian Society of Oriental Arts, established under his dynamic initiative, enlisted the influential patronage of Britons", mentioned P.R. Ramachandra Rao. "Bengal school: Abanindranath Tagore". *Modern Indian Painting*, p.16.
46. Chughtai, "The Future of Art in Pakistan", a pamphlet is in the collection of art archives of Chughtai Trust Museum, Lahore.
47. Arif Chughtai wrote about family in his own publication.
48. "I am not at home". Sumer recalled this during interview session with him at Karnal.
49. Arif Chughtai, *the Artist of the East*, p.7.

50. *Art and structure* by Promila Luthra, p. 23-29
51. *Letter from Chughtai to Basil Gray dated October 11, 1947.*
52. *Jalaluddin Ahmad. "Chughtai and his contemporaries". Focus on Pakistan, Vol. I, No. 3. (Karachi: Pakistan Tourism Development corporation, Aug. 1971), p. 28.*
53. *Dr. M.D. Jaseer mentioned his view in the catalogue, Chughtai exhibition, produced at the time of the opening of Pakistan Arts council, Lahore, dated dec. 11, 1949- Jan.1, 1950, op. 5-6.*
54. *During the interview session with Arif Chughtai.*
55. *The Hindustan Times, (Delhi), August 5, 1951.*
56. *The statesman, (Delhi), July 22, 1951.*
57. *During Chughtai's visit to India in 1955, he planned to meet Sumer in Karnal but before he could fulfill his wish to meet his old friend in Karnal, he had to cut short his visit due to the eye problem of his son and promised Sumer to see him in Dec. 1955 but he never returned thereafter. This was told by Sumer during the conversation in 1987.*

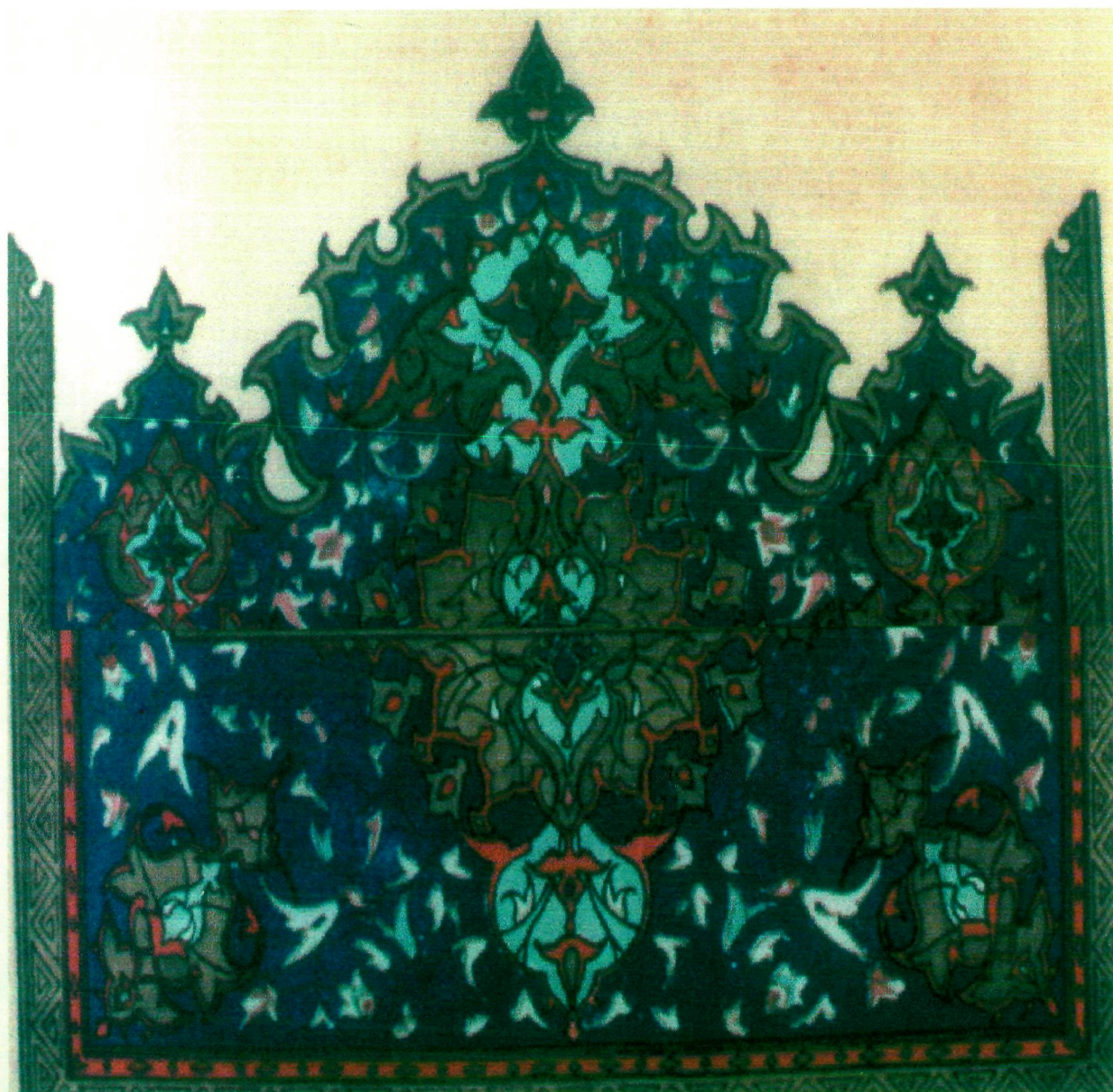
58. "Iqbal born in the year 1913 at Sialkot in Punjab was par excellence the poet of affirmation- his poetry says 'yes' to life. He describes life as a forward assimilative movement, its essence being the continual creation of desires and ideals. In his view, the Universe is not a finished product but is still in the process of making though not in accordance with a predestined, preconceived plan, such as would rob it of all originality". S.A. Rahman, Introduction, *Amal-e-Chughtai*, p.5.
59. Chughtai, "The Artist", *Amal-e-Chughtai*, p.14.
60. *Art and Personality*, p. 273.
61. S.A. Rahman, Introduction, p.3
62. Omar Khayyam (d.c. 112) was a philosopher, mathematician, astronomer and poet.
63. Abdul Rehman Chughtai. "My paintings". Caravan, ed. M.D. Taseer, (Lahore Jahangir Boat Club, 1933), p. 3.
64. Even in Lagan, Sept. 1941, Chughtai mentioned: these days I am busy compiling the edition of Omar

Khayya. This was also quoted by Abdullah in *Personality and Art*, p. 323.

65. This is mentioned in a letter in Urdu written by Chughtai's Younger brother Abdul Rahim after Chughtai's death to Sumer, a common friend of Chughtai dated April 14, 1975.
66. A few poems which Chughtai wrote time to time in Urdu to Sumer in his letters are overtime. *Nature and Dance* and a few articles like *Tajdar in Caravan*, p. 27, *Mashwara*, p. 51, *Memar-e-Taj (Builder of Taj)*, p. 125 were published in *Caravan*, 1934.
67. Saleem Mirza, "Ours is a nation which Forgets", *The illustrated weekly*, Issue 10, June 22, 1978, p.15
68. It is mentioned by Arif Chughtai in 'the One and the Only', Jan. 17, 1985 that we plan to convert his old Chabuk Sawaran residence in a samal memorial.

Chapter 2

*Technique and Style of
Abdur Rehman Chughtai
Lyrico Painting*



Chapter-2

Water colour is a transparent medium as compared to the opaque characteristics of oil which Chughtai rejected out right. Flat colouring is the tradition of the pictorial art of the East which Chughtai picked up in his early education from his uncle Karim Miran Bakhsh and later on from the Persian paintings. His works look closer to Persians and effect Mughal, Kangra and Bengal Schools of paintings. Chughtai specially selected water colour medium not because it was the popular medium of the day but because oriental artists have always preferred to use water colours.

He chose the water-colour media for his projections and utilised the infinite capacity of the flowing line work with graded wash colour technique.

Chughtai and his family were enormously secretive and protective about his wash and tempera technique.

He worked as a painter for nearly sixty years, yet none

can describe apart from the members of his family his method of work³. This means that with the death of Chughtai, this style became a thing of the past in Pakistan.⁴ Though his nephew Abdul Wahid, son of Rahim, who is residing in London is working on the line of Chughtai but again it remains restricted to him only.

In 1946, a year before the partition, he gave demonstration of his style for the student of Fine Arts College, Hyderabad. According to Femi Brehmenshah:

M.D. Jaseer was the only one of his close friends who has written about the kind of technique, Chughtai had followed and other poets and literary friends who were more interested with the outcome of his works rather than knowing about his manner of working.

The wife of Late Justice S.A. Rahman, a friend of Chughtai, recalled one of her visits to Chughtai's studio at Koocha Chabuk Sawaran, Lahore and told me that though she did not know much about Chughtai's method of working but what I was that Chughtai was holding a very thin hair brush almost of a single hair in his hand to render a thin, interlaced line on the sole of a woman's feet which took him sometime to finish.

G. Venkatachalam wrote in *My contemporaries*, "In

Feb. 1928, that I arrived at Chabuk Sawaran to be the guest of Rahman Chughtai and to see the artist work at close quarters. 8 but Venkatachalam had not written anything about Chughtai's method of working.

While interviewing Sumer, artist-writer friend of Chughtai, it is learnt that even his close friends had not visited his upstairs studio. Instead, Chughtai used to bring his painting material occasionally to the ground floor of his house a Koocha Chabuk Sawaran and worked while talking sessions with friends were going on. But when he not want to be disturbed, he could simply say to his friends 'I am not at home' 9 and they never used to bother him at the odd hours of working. So his art activities were restricted mainly to his upstairs working studio only. It is evident that his friends were rather interested to see the final product of his works than to see him working. It is possible that Chughtai might have camouflaged his technique while demonstrating for the students at Hyderabad with what actually he does in his Lahore studio or it might be possible that what technique he used in 1920s, did not apply the same in late 1940s while demonstrating in Hyderabad to hide his original technique or it might be possible that his technique changed with the passage of time. Chughtai has favourably

synthesised, the Wash technique and the technique of tempera, a technique which employs pigments suspended in an emulsion vehicle and gained the brilliant and clear effects. M.D. Taseer stated that Chughtai has transformed the oriental water colour into tempera and thus brought greater weight and impact to the medium⁴⁹. Though Chughtai could achieve the quality of lightness, airiness and softness yet it lack the translucent quality. In a 'pure' water colour, light is reflected both from the surface and from the white paper underneath the pigment. Though lines sometimes seem to enjoy a separate existence as they flow smoothly and fluently over the surface of artist's choice yet these lines play an integral part of Chughtai's creative process and cannot be considered as a separate activity. Apart from thought, imagination and expression, perfect and intricate lines are one of the finest assets of Chughtai's paintings. They lend charm to his paintings, drawings and etchings which bespeak his creative emotions. He uses lines to produce various effects, to work out the problem which was the vital force of his art. Chughtai's root cause of success is his peculiar drawing and persuasive line.

Chughtai learnt his basic drawing under the guidance of his uncle Baba Miran Bakhsh (See Chapter I), a Maqqash who laid the foundation of Oriental essentials in him. And I think this echoed throughout his painting career. This foundation proved to be an instrument in achieving the goal of fine draftsmanship. Chughtai's paintings reflect the characteristics of Oriental draftsmanship so he liked to be called an Oriental artist.

Chughtai has shown his brilliance in metal working method and in pen, ink and brush drawing. In some of his compositions, the main emphasis is on line apart from the colour used here and there in selected areas to give more illustrative approach. Many of Chughtai's coloured drawings are done in this tinted linear style. A few of these are Natraja, Tapasvi Buddha, five Pandavas, with the Flute, Amrit-jal, The Divine Cowherd, Ranjha's song, More than Shadow, The Bather, A Woman with a mirror, and The Bide.

The purity of his lines is such that I wish Chughtai should publish a collection of his pencil drawings

and characteristic etchings in separate volume so that his admirers may.

He³³, and Chughtai has very carefully adopted this and sketched out his ideas. He gained full control over the 'vocabulary' through which he communicated to other in whatever manner he wished to.

Colour

Chughtai is one of the supreme masters of colour harmony. The choice of colour was no colour was no doubt determined by the unique sensibility of the painter. The selection of the colours is personal but the harmonization of the preferred colours, their application in specific areas within the stipulated space of there paper, their modulated tones, all these manifest Chughtai's achievement over the skill of mixing of colours and the manipulation of brush.

He entirely abandoned the use of rough finish and has framed his own colour symphonies to express the fervency of his feelings. The usage of colour (in a symbolic way) by Chughtai is more or less prescribed by his inner self. The reflection of his personality is voiced through his

colours. Though in some of his paintings these are established in the sense of symbols.

We can call Chughtai, "the King of colours"⁶. It is true that Chughtai manipulated the colours and brush in whatever way he wished to reproduce his fantasies.

Red being the favourite of his palette, is handled with a great sense of perfection. In *The Still Life* Chughtai exercised red colours in leaves and it proves his fascination for red tones. Blue pigment which is cool in its temperament is modelled with subtle gradation in *The story Teller*. The painting is bathed in colour of eternity. The reflection of blue tinge on *Taj Mahal* and on peacock manifest sentimental values which penetrate the whole atmosphere with serenity, which is an intangible element of his paintings. Through the instrument of colour, the emotional symbolism is very well manifested. The commentary in *Amal-e-Chughtai* for the painting says that "The colour same is marvelous, fresh and unique".

It seems that Chughtai understood the secret of yellow, make a mighty appeal to our aesthetic sensibilities. The treatment of his colouring is totally his own. He has initiated some new tones which would have appeared

spiritless to his ancestors but give his paintings a singular freshness.

Costumes, Hair Styles and Footwear

The dress plays an important role while categorising any school of art. It is symbol of culture by which one can judge the time and period. Chughtai is also conscious of presenting each character according to its demand keeping in view its social, religious, and mythological background. On the other hand, sometimes Chughtai presented imaginative dresses of the characters. The dresses caused by Chughtai for his obvious in the style.

A. Hamid, one of Chughtai's early critics remarked, "Thought their dresses are vaguely of Sixteenth century Central Asia", they never seem to have existed anywhere in the world".

Mostly, in Chughtai's paintings, the costumes have an echo of middle eastern styles which existed in India during Mughal period onwards. They heavy opaque costumes, cover the whole body from neck to toes, are most frequently seen in Chughtai's Muslim characters.

There is not much difference in the dresses of male and female which Chughtai executed, in his later phase especially seen in Amal-e-Chughtai, though his very early works of Muragga style do present a variety in dresses.

The traditional image of woman is implicit in his paintings. Hindu female figures are usually shown wearing bodies, 'Cholis', 'Ghaghra', 'Dupatta', or veil and jewelry. In some of his Hindu based themes, the upper part of the body is worn bare, wearing nothing except jewelry like in Devdasi Amrit-Jal AT Toilet, Tabaswai Buddha, The Ragini, Yashoda, Ambapali and on the Threshold. In all these paintings breast is exposed and bejeweled either with flowers or with ornaments.

In few paintings, the head is covered with veil and then the veil goes down to the waist from the back exposing the whole bosom like in Natraja.

The female figures are more or less shown with the 'dupattas', 'pagris', turban or scarf on their heads. Once in a while Chughtai has used a leaf of lotus upside down as one of the head dresses, making an impression of a European hat.

Even male figures are shown draped in full length clothes extending upto feet revealing just hands and face. It seems that Chughtai was more hesitant in revealing the bodies of Muslim characters, being socially conservative in contrast to Hindus.

Male costumes are dominated by 'dhoti', sash and 'pagri' and remained favourite of Chughtai and prevailed throughout. The main character of Mahabharata, Krishna is also projected in these clothes especially 'dhoti' and sash played a significant role.

Chughtai has used blue colour for the hair of woman to embellish the charm of her femininity. The length of the hair fulfills the object of covering the head with the 'dupatta'. The serpentine long hair knitted in a 'parandi' encircles her neck many a time. These heavy blue bands supposed to be the hair, around her neck give her a solid and bold look as against the usual delicate and soft look of Chughtai's alluring female forms. The blue coloured hair are unique in their approach and the end of the 'parandi' is designed traditionally and artistically.

In his earlier works especially in delineating love themes from the couplets of Ghalib reproduced in

Muragga-I-Chughtai, the hair styles of female figures are quite protruding. The wavy, long, disarranged and uncombed hair are left loose like those in *The Flame of Love* and the *Extinguished Flame*.

The stray locks of hair seem to flow like a water, some times hanging and in some paintings, look a part of the costume itself. The length of the hair is so much that they even touch the floor. Chughtai's exquisiteness of outlining novel styles of hair long plaits knitted in 'parandi' reaching upto the knees are also shown. These are generally depicted while portraying dancers and Punjabi characters *Heer-Ranjha* and *Sohini-Mahiwal*.

The numerous endless hair styles of female figures are used in Chughtai's paintings with little bit of alterations ranging from complicated to the simple ones. Even the simplest hair styles incurred in his paintings enhance the owner's innocence and charm. Chughtai seems to be aware of his character's mind and when mind of the character and its outer decorations complement each other. Then true character takes birth and Chughtai has demonstrated this phenomena swimmingly in his creative work.

Footwear

Though footwear are an integral part of the dress, Chughtai has become more or less casual while executing them. Mostly, these 'chappal' and 'juti' are matched with the dress of the characters but these do not seem to be proportionate.

The slippers are generally half eclipsed by the long empire-style gown touching almost the feet. Full slippers are visible only when the characters are depicted in 'pyzama' or the dress shown above ankles. The designs projected on slippers are not similar but the outfill is almost of the same style.

These are traditional chappals called 'juti's' in its regional language, bearing the mark in the form of folk motifs of their respective regions.

It is interesting to note that these chappals are worn by the royal dignitaries or noble men and women of the court, pointing to the fact that this was essentially an aristocratic fashion and not a need of all individuals. Sometimes bare-foot figures are also painted.

Etching

In India, in the last part of the nineteenth century, Raja Ravi Verma, first Indian modern artist explored the graphic medium by establishing his own lithographic press at Ghatapore in Bombay and produced many prints based on religious and Social themes'.

Chughtai also did a large number of works very like line drawings incorporating the romantic imagery of the period'.

Abdul Rehman Chughtai who has created his own style, 'in the creative field of painting has also made distinction of making the etching medium in his own distinct Oriental manner. 'his etchings form another contribution to Oriental art and it is a characteristic quality of Chughtai that though he learnt the technique from the West, it becomes fully Eastern in his hands'.

Though he established himself as an etcher in this subcontinent but at the same time,

Chughtai must have tried his hand in this technioque when he was an art student at Mayo School of Art, Lahore and later on as an incharge of its

Lithography°. Department. The freedom of expression offered by printmaking inspired him to take up private lesson of etching and aquatint from the etcher Smart during his first visit to England in 1932.

Though Chughtai was original in his approach, yet we cannot deny the influence of great Master Rembrandt in his earlier etchings.

Chughtai started etching and engraving work only after his return from London in 1936.

Although Chughtai was widely known for his skill and depth in water colour painting, he was no less popular as an etcher with the masses. "etching is a purely graphic art to be executed through line alone. And Chughtai commands a perfect mastery of line.

Chughtai very carefully and with great maturity, carved out his experiments in various mediums, succeeded in bringing out some very fruitful results in the form of paintings, drawings, etchings and aquatint which adorn innumerable walls of the world museums, art galleries and private houses which show their accountability till today.

Foot notes

1. Chughtai was very much fascinated by water colour medium and never even thought of executing the paintings in the medium of oil.
2. The exhibition entitled, "The unknown Chughtai" was organized by the Embassy of Federal Republic of Germany, Islamabad, Dec. 8-011, 1983, p. 2. And the brochure was printed on this occasion.
3. Abdullah. Chughtai. "The Chughtai school of Painting". Abdur Rehman Chughtai: Personality and Art, p.248.
4. Ustad Bashir ud-Din, who was an associate of Chughtai and works in Wash technique like that of Bengal School but Bashir's style and its outcome is quite different from that of Chughtai.
5. A letter to Sumer by Rahim, the youngest brother of Chughtai dated June 14, 1975.
6. M.D. Taseer. Introduction. Chughtai's Exhibition. Pakistan Arts Council organised

*Chughtai's Exhibition at Lahore from Dec. 11, 1949,
Dec. 1, 1950.*

7. "According to his (Chughtai) own statement, he never had a moment's leisure to work in collaboration with these artists. He never found time to go to Bengal for this purpose although he recognized with profound veneration, the Bengal School of Art". Chughtai, "The Artist". *Amal-e-Chughtai*, p.10. Even his son Arif Chughtai did not accept the fact of being influenced by Bengal school directly. May be because of criticism. Chughtai received from Bengal artists. During his formative period, he expressed this view in "Artist of the East. Abdur Rahman Chughtai." p.3. "Chughtai received much opposition, particularly from the Bengal School. It may be recorded that an arch Bengali opponent of Chughtai had made the famous statement that spring cannot be harnessed by a single ababeel (singing bird). And single no doubt was Chughtai". Here one standing myth may be once for all corrected that Chughtai was perhaps a follower of the Bengal School of Art". He further agrees in saying, "This is merely a period



of discovery and experimentation, and no doubt he learnt and was influenced by many sources..."

8. Chughtai. *"My Paintings"*.
9. Referred by Arif Chughtai during the exhibition of Chughtai painting in Lahore in 1950.
10. M.D. Taseer. *Introduction*. p.5
11. Razia Siraz-ud-Din. *Introduction*. Chughtai's *Paintings*. p.14.
12. Siraz ud-din. *Introduction*. Chughtai's *Paintings*. p. 13.
13. *Ibid*.
14. Jalaluddin Akhamd Referred A. Hamid's comments. one of the Chughtai's early critics, in his article in *"Chughtai and his contemporaries"*. *Focus on Pakistan*. vol. I, No. 3. Aug. 1971.p.31.
15. Chughtai painted many nudes mostly relating them with Indian themes. The painting entitled *Parvati*, a Hindu Goddess is in the collection of Chughtai Museum Trust, Lahore.

16. *The portrait of a lady with a lotus leaf on her head was adorning the wall of the office of Chughtai museum Trust.*
17. *A brochure was brought out on the occasion of an exhibition of Chughtai's paintings. The exhibition titled "The unknown Chughtai", M.A. Rahman Chughtai. Islamabad, Dec. 8-11, 1983*
18. *Amit Mukhopadhyay and Nirmalendu Das, "Graphic Art in India: 1850 to 1950", Graphic Art in India Since 1850, New Delhi: Lalit Kala Akademi, 1985, p.8.*
19. *Jaya Appasamy, "Contemporary Graphics in India", Graphic Art in India Since 1850, p.21.*
20. *M.D. Taseer, introduction, p. 7.*
21. *Lithography is the major form of paleographic or surface painting. The design is not incised into a plate of black, but drawn on the surface of a lithographic stone. Invented in 1798 by alloys Senefelder, the process is based on the principle that grease and water repel each other. There are number of variations to the technique. Metal usually zinc, and plastic plates are*

often used instead of is stone. Whereas etching relies on acid rather than manual force to bite the design into the plate.

Chapter 3

Contours of Popular romantic poetry and Chughtai "Lyrico Paintins" a thematic appreciation



Chapter-3

The main view-point of Chughtai's vision is to provide such a highway between man and nature which has the warmth of love, the passion of life and the power of discernment that man may not be destitute of his aesthetic imaginations and may not be deprived of the intensity of devotion. When he started his pictorial creation, Indian painting, however modern it might have looked, at the time, was as full of pessimism that any great poet or painter, although he was alive in his vision and ideology, bore the bond of a continuous slavery. All around this art and only one pursuit in its creativity, the quest where the Buddha had vanished after his self-emancipation (nirvana). Leaving aside the Mughals, the Orientals did everything to tighten the cords and to narrow the meshes of this net. When Iqbal had composed his first verse of his first poet, he had no thought of Lari-Kalim or Pyami-I. Mashriq.

But had the potential qualities and the elegance and loftiness of these great poems! If Chughtai has had the privilege of

being a contemporary of Iqbal it is in this that Chughtai, under his influence, broke the shackles of pessimism, the conception framed by the philosophic theory which had long circumscribed the human mind. He has poured his green, red, blue and yellow hues in such a purple goblet that the human spirit may enjoy the rhythmic bliss and pleasure as well as the attractive way through which the message of life is expressed and communicated. The glory of Chughtai's colours and the conception of his images have an ennobling effect on life. His visualizations are wedded to the social order to which he belongs and are determined by its demands. His conceptions take the form of a melody that resounds within us so that we cannot remain unmoved by the purity of his art and his creations.

Ghalib and Chughtai

Chughtai was interested in Ghalib because there were many similarities between him and Mirza Ghalib. The main characteristics which were common between Mirza Ghalib's couplets and the themes of Chughtai's paintings gave shape to *Muraqqa Chughtai*.

Desert in Bloom (Plate No. 1)

Chughtai is a great painter of figure subjects specially female figures and there is a great variegation within his own vision and

idiom of figural theme and their concepts. In his painting desert in bloom he has very carefully treated the line work in the drapery of a female figure which is wearing a long dupatta with an artistic design on the edges of her breast. Another four male figures are sitting under the shadow of an arched shaped tree which is beautifully treated in the dark green and brown colours. All male figures have been equipped with royal dresses which keeps away the scorching heat of the stony and sandy desert.

The Sagi (Plate No. 2)

Chughtai has repeated his subjects time & again and even painted the same picture with a little bit of alteration. The effect of golden brown colours glowing soft gives to his paintings a look of eternal daintiness. The contrast of brown with dark smoky gray with yellow effect of her dress, (Long Kurta and Shalwar) giving a feeling as if the lower portion of the painting is lit up by invisible light.

The full figure placed in the centre of the painting resembles the 'Surahi'

Captive Bird (Plate No. 3)

The usage of opaque for making the details persists in his early phase. The circumstantial adornment which is

ostensible in the captive bird published in Chatterjee's picture album remained the characteristic features of the Chughtai's art for many more years but in an improved manner. In this painting, he has carefully outlined the drapery and jewelry with opaque colours to break the monotony of the picture. The face is shown lit up but the source of light is not apparent. It seems that the highlighted areas are punctuated just to carve out the figure from the background of the same hue as of the figure.

The old lamp (Plate No. 4)

This is one of the earliest works of Chughtai which is possessed by Chughtai Museum trust. Chughtai handled this painting in water colour medium in the style of Bengal School. The tinted atmosphere of the painting is superb and a mystic effect has been created the figure of an old man holding a lamp and protecting the flame by his hands with the shape of his hands raised upward like offering a gesture towards moon is excellent Chughtai applied numerous washes of dark hues and blended them to his best to avoid sharp contrast.

The Reflection: (Plate No. 5)

The portrait which is reproduced in Chughtai's Indian painting has resemblance to facial expressions of Kishangarh miniature painting but Chughtai very carefully moulded this in his own style by giving it a linear effect depicted on a different media. The woman with a mirror reproduced in Chughtai's Indian paintings presents the distinct softening of line and expression. Her 'Choli', Skin, hair, jewelry and mirror are filled with colours but the 'ghagra', 'duppatta' and round vessels placed besides her are given a linear approach. The tinted lines placed with incomparable brilliance strike the transparent and sensitive mind of an onlooker.

Music Lesson (Plate No. 6)

Young musician is singing with a tune of the musical instrument which he is playing. The whole composition is engraved with few but firm and unerrred lines. This is housed in Chughtai Museum Trust.

Apart from these, there are many prints depicting unusual event which Chughtai has condensed into simple

subjects and portrayed with great dramatic force in the medium of print making.

Song offering (Plate No. 7)

Apart from these there are many painting depicting unusual events which Chughtai has condensed into simple subjects with great dramatic force in the medium of print making. The sight of a bird singing with the tune of musical instrument near the figure is very effective. The whole composition is made with few but firm and unerring lines. This painting is based on Ghalib's most beautiful verse "Chaman ka jalwa".

The Extinguished Flame (Plate No. 8)

This can be taken as a master piece. In Chughtai's own words a real masters is never captive of any special lines or style but he always tries to produce every painting as master piece. The depiction of a imagination depends exclusively on the personality of the artist. In this panting the artist has avoided the traditional way of painting, this subject and has shown an extinguished candle along with a a female figure lying on her bosom head downwards. The hair style which has been shown in the picture is a great

attraction and beauty, the wine flask lying near the figure associated with the separation of her lover depict's what the poet wants to explain. The woman burning with pangs of separation is also associated with extinguished candle as well as burnt moth. Chughtai successfully treated the inner feelings of an unconscious female figure which is carrying the pain of her love.

Flower Gatherers (Plate No. 9)

Some identical paintings in national gallery of Modern Art Delhi Sometime give the effect of Mughal miniatures. In the painting flowers gatherers a child a lady is picking and gathering flowers and those white flowers give the effect of stars with dark back ground. The long tree with sharp leaves gives the effect of dark clouds in the sky . In the dark dimlight. The red "ghagra and long blue duppatta" of the figure is the main attraction and gives the full effect of the painting.

The Wasted Vigil (Plate No. 10)

This painting is housed in national gallery of modern art New Delhi. The treatment of the whole composition is superb and all the elements bear the unmistakable stamp of

Chughtai. The soft facial expression of a young lady and the delicate expression of her feelings justify a lovers emotion as the title does not convey particular character it can be inferred that a man behind a female is a lover and she is the beloved and holding a small lamp in her both hand is a symbol of love and peace. Chughtai has taken the lines representation in basic "raw material" for personal expression.

Resting Place: (Plate No. 11)

Chughtai another beautiful painting which is based on the theme of Ghalib's couplets. Chughtai depicted perfect peaceful of a graveyard where a lover is buried. The atmosphere of a graveyard shown with the dark blue colour mix with green and the dress which the figure is wearing is also painted in a blue colour which is similarly showing the eternal peace and the same atmosphere of the graveyard. This deep sense of love can be easily imagined with the atmosphere which Chughtai carefully treated. The female figure (beloved) is shown sitting near the grave and offering prayer for the peace of the departed soul of her lover. The black and blue dress enhances the beauty of the hands and face giving a glowing effect like a moon behind the black clouds. The beauty of the composition is that the face

acquires a central place in the painting and the absence of the moon on the sky gives more importance to the face of the figure and some times the glowing face seems to be as a subject throwing light on other subjects of the painting.

Poet's Vision (Plate No. 12)

Another print with poet's point of view has been painted in a modern look where a poet giving a lesson and sitting behind the female figure looking towards her wants to read her inner feelings. The natural motives have got mixed up with the living objects of the composition. Chughtai has successfully treated feeling of love for each other by their expression.

Id moon (Plate No. 13)

Chughtai's one of the famous painting *Id moon* based on the religious theme a great Muslim festival is painted by Chughtai showing old female figure (mother) sitting near a young female figure (daughter) and a child standing in a balcony and looking towards the sky to have a view of moon. Muslims observe fast throughout the month of ramazan and in the end of the month when the new moon is sighted they are anxious to see the *Id moon*.

This painting is reproduced in Muragga-i-Chughtai in 1928 and later published in Chughtai painting in 1936.

A Serenade (Plate No. 14)

The magic of Chughtai fingers can be viewed in the coloured tinted drawing entitled Serenade which is in the collection of Chughtai museum trust. The whole musical atmosphere is projected with mainly dusty yellow brown and red, colours providing of passion and excitement. The delicate and dreamy expression of the female figure are well captured by mystic colours. They are shown in intoxicated with their emotion.

مدت ہوئی ہے یار کو جہاں کئے ہوئے
جوش قدح سے بزم چراغاں کئے ہوئے
پھر وضع احتیاط سے رکنے لگا ہے دم
برسوں ہوئے ہیں چاک گریباں کئے ہوئے
دل پھر طواف کوئے ملامت کو جائے ہے
پندار کا صنم کدہ ویراں کئے ہوئے
پھر چاہتا ہوں نامہ دلدار کھولنا
جاں نذر دلفریبی عنوان کئے ہوئے
مانگے ہے پھر کسی کو لب بام پر ہوس
زلف سیاہ رخ پہ پریشاں کئے ہوئے

The Desert in Bloom



مُدت ہوئی ہے یار کو مہماں کئے ہوئے
جوش قدح سے بزم چراغاں کئے ہوئے

مجھ تک کب ان کی بزم میں آتا تھا دورِ جام
ساقی نے کچھ ملانہ دیا ہو شراب میں
قاصد کے آتے آتے خطِ اک اور لکھ رکھوں
میں جانتا ہوں جو وہ لکھیں گے جواب میں
ہے تیوری چڑھی ہوئی اندر نقاب کے
ہے اک شکن پڑی ہوئی طرفِ نقاب میں
لاکھوں لگاؤ ایک چرانا نگاہ کا
لاکھوں بناؤ ایک بگڑنا عتاب میں
غالب چھٹی شراب پر اب بھی کبھی کبھی
پیتا ہوں روزا بر و شبِ ماہتاب میں

This Ghazal is written after 1827 taken from Diwan-e-Ghalib. Published from Jahangir Book Club, Lahore Pakistan in 1935 Page 68.



Pl no. 2

مجھ تک کب ان کی بزم میں آتا تھا دورِ جام
ساقی نے کچھ ملا نہ دیا ہو شراب میں

بلبل کے کاروبار پہ ہیں خندہ ہائے گل
کہتے ہیں جس کو عشق خلل ہے دماغ کا
تازہ نہیں ہے نشہ فکر سخنِ مجھے
تریا کی قدیم ہوں دودِ چراغ کا
سو بار بندِ عشق سے آزاد ہم ہوئے
پر کیا کریں کہ دل ہی عدو ہے فراغ کا
بے خون دل ہے چشم میں موجِ نگہ غبار
یہ میکدہ خراب ہے مے کے سراغ کا
باغِ شگفتہ تیرا بساطِ نشاطِ دل
ابر بہارِ غمکدہ کس کے دماغ کا

This Ghazal is written before 1827 taken from Diwan-e-Shalib published from Jahangir Book Club, Lahore Pakistan in 1935 Page 30.

The Captive Bird



Plate - 3

بیل کے کار و بار پہ ہیں تھندہ ہائے گل
کہتے ہیں جس کو عشق غلل ہے دماغ کا

آہ کو چاہئے اکِ عمر اثر ہونے تک
 کون جیتا ہے تری زلف کے سر ہونے تک
 عاشقی صبر طلب اور تمنا بیتاب
 دل کا کیا رنگ کروں خون جگر ہونے تک
 ہم نے مانا کہ تغافل نہ کر دے لیکن
 خاک ہو جائیں ہم تم کو خبر ہونے تک
 یک نظر بیش نہیں فرصتِ ہستی غافل
 گرمی بزم ہے اک رقصِ شر ہونے تک
 غمِ ہستی کا اسد کس سے ہو جز مرگ علاج
 شمع ہر رنگ میں جلتی ہے سحر ہونے تک

The old Lamp



Pl no. 4

غم ہستی کا اسد کس سے ہو جز مرگ علاج
شمع ہر رنگ میں جلتی ہے سحر ہونے تک

اُٹینہ دیکھ اپنا سامنہ لے کے رہ گئے
صاحب کو دل نہ دینے پہ کتنا غرور تھا
قاصد کو اپنے ہاتھ سے گردن نہ مار لے
اس کی خطا نہیں ہے یہ میرا قصور تھا
مشہدِ عاشق سے کوسوں تک جو اُگتی ہے حنا
کس قدر یارب ہلاکِ حسرتِ پابو س تھا
کیسا کہوں بیماریِ غم کی فراغت کا بیان
جو کہ کھایا خونِ دل بے منتِ کیموس تھا
حاصلِ الفت نہ دیکھا جز شکستِ آرزو
دل بدل پیوستہ گویا اک لبِ افسوس تھا

The Reflection



۲۶ - ۵

آئنه دیکھ اپنا سامنے لے کے رہ گئے
صاحب کو دل نہ دینے پہ کتنا غور رہتا

نہ گلِ نغمہ نہ پردہ سَاز
 میں ہوں اپنی شکست کی آواز
 ہوں گرفتار الفتِ صیاد
 ورنہ باقی ہے طاقتِ پرواز
 وہ بھی دن ہو کہ اس ستمگر سے
 ناز کھینچوں بجائے حسرتِ ناز
 نہیں دل میں مرے وہ قطرہٴ نحوں
 جس سے مڑگاں ہوئی نہ گلباز
 مجھ کو پوچھا تو کچھ غضب نہ ہوا
 میں غریب اور تو غریب نواز
 اسد اللہ خاں تمام ہوا
 اے درلفادہ رند شاہد باز

(۹۶)

This Ghazal is written before 1827 taken from *Diwan-e-Shalib*. Published from *Jahangir Book Club, Lahore* Pakistan in 1935 Page 151-152.

The Music Lesson



Pl no. 6

نہ گلِ نغمہ ہو نہ پردہ ساز
میں ہوں اپنی شکست کی آواز

وہی اک بات ہے جو یاں نفس وال تکہت گل ہے
چمن کا جلوہ باعث ہے مری رنگیں نوائی کا
نہ ہو حسن تماشا دوستِ رسوائے وفائی کا
یہ مہر صد نظر ثابت ہے دعویٰ پارسائی کا
وہاں ہر بت پیغارہ جو زنجیر رسوائی
عدم تک بے وفا چرچا ہے تیری بے وفائی کا
نادے نامہ کو اتنا طول غالب مختصر لکھ دے
کہ حسرتِ سنج ہوں عرضِ ستمہائے جدائی کا

This Ghazal is written after 1827 taken from Diwan-e-Shalib. Published from Jahangir Book Club, Lahore Pakistan in 1935 Page 27.

The song Offering



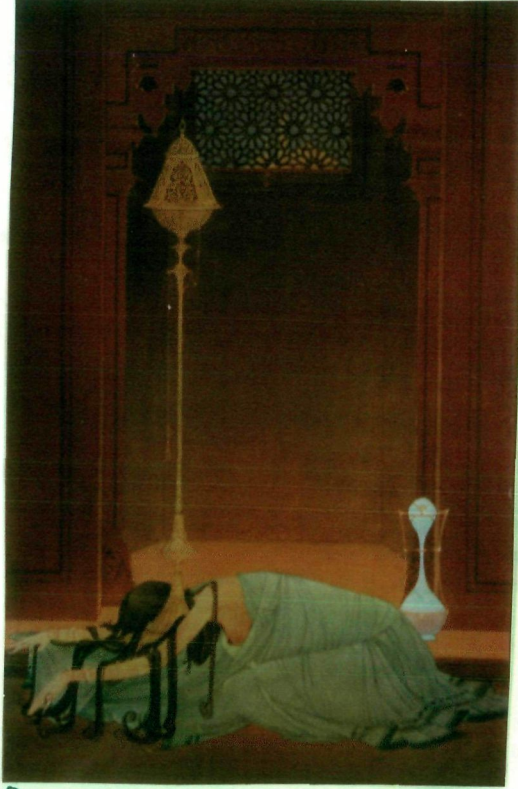
PL 17

وہی اک بات ہے جو یاں نفس واں تکہت گل ہے
چمن کا جلوہ باعث ہے مری رنگیں نوائی کا

ظلمتِ گدے میں میرے شبِ غم کا جوش ہے
 اک شمع ہے دلیلِ سحر سو خموش ہے
 دیکھو مجھے جو دیدہٴ عبرتِ نگاہ ہو
 میری سنو جو گوشِ نصیحتِ نبوش ہے
 لطفِ خرامِ ساقی و ذوقِ صداۓ چنگ
 یہ جنتِ نگاہ وہ فردوسِ گوش ہے
 داغِ فراقِ صحبتِ شب کی جلی ہوئی
 اک شمع رہ گئی ہے سو وہ بھی خموش ہے
 آتے ہیں غیب سے یہ مضا میں خیال میں
 غالبِ صریرِ خامہ نوائے سر و شہ ہے

This Ghazal is written after 1827 taken from Diwan-e-
 Ghalib. Published from Jahangir Book Club, Lahore
 Pakistan in 1935 Page 112-113.

The Extinguished Flame



PL - 8

داغِ فراقِ صحبتِ شب کی جلی ہوئی
اک شمع رہ گئی ہے ہو وہ بھی خاموش ہے

دیکھو اے ساکنانِ خطّہ خاک
اس کو کہتے ہیں عالم آرائی
کہ زمیں ہو گئی سرتاسر
روکشِ سطحِ چرخِ مینائی
سبزے کو جب کہیں جگہ نہ ملی
بن گیا روئے آب پر کائی
سبزہ گل کو دیکھنے کے لئے
چشمِ زکس کو دی ہے بینائی
کیوں نہ دنیا کو ہو خوشی غالب
شاہِ دیندار نے شفا پائی

(99)

This Ghazal is written after 1827 taken from Diwan-e-Ghalib. Published from Jahangir Book Club, Lahore Pakistan in 1935 Page 121-122.

The Flower Gatherers



PL - 9

دیکھو ہے ساکنانِ خطّہ خاک
اس کو کہتے ہیں عالم آرائی

نفس نہ انجن آرزو سے باہر کھینچ
اگر شراب نہیں انتظارِ ساغر کھینچ
کمالِ گرمی سخی تلاشِ دید نہ پوچھ
برنگِ خار مرے آئینہ سے جوہر کھینچ
تجھے یہاں نہ راحت ہے انتظارِ اے دل
کیا ہے کس نے اشارہ کہ نازِ بستر کھینچ
تیری طرف ہے یہ حسرتِ نظارہ زنگس
بہ کورئی دل و چشمِ رقیب ساغر کھینچ
بہ نیم غمزہ ادا کر حق و دیعتِ ناز
نیام پردہ زخمِ جگر سے خنجر کھینچ

This Ghazal is written before 1827 taken from Diwan-e-Shalib. Published from Jahangir Book Club, Lahore Pakistan in 1935. Page 46.

The Wasted Vigil



Pl. no. 10

نفس نہ انجمن آرزو سے باہر کھینچ
اگر شراب نہیں انتظارِ ساغر کھینچ

حُسنِ غمزے کی کشاکش سے چھٹا میرے بعد
بارے آرام سے ہیں اہل جفا میرے بعد
شمع بجھتی ہے، تو اُس میں سے دھواں اٹھتا ہے
شعلہٴ عشق سیہ پوش ہو میرے بعد

خوں ہے دلِ خاک میں احوالِ بتاں پر یعنی
اُن کے ناخن ہوئے محتاجِ حنا میرے بعد
غم سے مرتا ہوں کہ اتنا نہیں دنیا میں کوئی
کہ کرے تعزیتِ مہر و وفا میرے بعد
اے بیکسی عشق پہ روتا غالب!
کس کے گھر جائے گا سیلابِ بلا میرے بعد؟

(۱۵۱)

*This Ghazal is written after 1827 taken from Diwan-e-
Ghalib. Published from Jahangir Book Club, Lahore
Pakistan in 1935 Page 46-47.*

The Resting Place



PL - 11

شمع بجھتی ہے تو اس میں سے دھواں اٹھتا ہے
شعلہ عشق سیہ پوش ہو امیرے بعد

بازیچہ اطفال ہے دنیا مرے آگے
ہوتا ہے شب و روز نماشہ مرے آگے
مت پوچھ کہ کیا حال ہے میرا تیرے پیچھے
تو دیکھ کہ کیا رنگ ہے میرا تیرے آگے
ہوتا ہے نہاں گرد میں صحرا مرے ہوتے
گھستا ہے جبیں خاک پہ دریا مرے آگے
گو ہاتھ کو جنبش نہیں آنکھوں میں تو دم ہے
رہنے دوا بھی سا غرو مینا مرے آگے

(102)

*This famous Ghazal is written after 1827 taken from
Diwan-e-Ghalib. Published from Jahangir Book
Club, Lahore Pakistan in 1935 Page 133-34*

The Poets Vision



PL - 12

گوہاتھ کو جنبش نہیں آنکھوں میں تو دم ہے
رہنے دوا بھی سا غر و مینا مرے آگے

ہاں مہ نوسنیں ہم اُس کا نام
جس کو تو جھک کر کر رہا ہے سلام
عذر میں تین دن نہ آنے کا
لے کے آیا ہے عید کا پیغام
تجھ کو کیا پایہ روشناسی کا
جزیہ تقریب عید ماہِ صیام
اُڑ کے جاتا کہاں کہ تاروں کا
آسمان نے بھار کھا تھا دام
میں نے مانا کہ تو ہے حلقہ بگوش
غالب اس کا مگر نہیں ہے غلام

(۱۰۳)

*This Ghazal is written after 1827 taken from Diwan-e-
Ghalib. Published from Jahangir Book Club, Lahore
Pakistan in 1935 Page 158-59*

The Eid Moon



PL - 13

ہاں مہ نو سُنیں ہم اس کا نام
جس کو تو جھک کر کر رہا ہے سلام

چاہے ہے پھر کس کو مقابل میں آرزو
سُرمہ سے تیز دشنہ مثر گاں کئے ہوئے
مدّت ہوئی ہے یار کو جہاں کئے ہوئے
جوش قدح سے بزم چراغاں کئے ہوئے
پھر جی میں ہے کہ در پہ کسی کے پڑے رہیں
سرزیر بار منتِ درباں کئے ہوئے
جی ڈھونڈھتا ہے پھر وہی فرصت کے رات دن
بیٹھے رہیں تصورِ جاناں کئے ہوئے
غالب ہمیں نہ چھیڑ کہ پھر جوشِ اشک سے
بیٹھے ہیں ہم تمہیہ طوفاں کئے ہوئے

(104)

*This Ghazal is written after 1827 taken from Diwan-e-
Ghalib. Published from Jahangir Book Club, Lahore
Pakistan in 1935 Page 153-154.*

A Serenade



PL - 14

چاہے ہے پھر کسی کو مقابل میں آرزو
سُرمہ سے تیز دشنہ مژگاں کئے ہوئے

Iqbal and Chughtai

The personality of Chughtai even to-day because of his modern tendencies attracts to itself the solitary movements that have lost the faculties of thought and feeling because of their indulgence in art for art's sake. He does not indulge in escapism nor does he create any intricacies so that it may not be possible for us to easily appreciate his unbounded creative faculties. The upsetting bewilderment caused in the minds of his fault-finders because of his artistic vigour and his healthy growth is indirectly the recognition of his greatness, his popularity and his personality.

The Story Teller (Plate No. 15)

Observational contrast between history and imagination, the melody of silence encompasses the solitude of the Taj-Mahal.

There is an assurance of Chughtai's genius achieving a personal style and technique through which he expresses impressionistic form. This style is characterized by vigour of colouring and new aesthetic.

Chughtai is the pioneer of this style in the East. People say, he is the master of colours and loves yellow

colour immensely. As a matter of fact he loves neither red nor blue nor yellow. He treats all colours with the sense and strength of a master, or he has an extraordinary knowledge of colours with the sense and strength of a master, for he has an extraordinary knowledge of colour scheme and its treatment. This has given him international fame.

His handling of the composition is particularly remarkable. The colour scheme is marvelous, fresh and unique.

The Still Life (Plate No. 16)

This picture, with a charm of calligraphic lines and curves, is a mass of colours and variety of the subjects. Chughtai painted few landscapes, flowers painting and still life. In most of his paintings, we find some kind of flowers with a great splendour of colour scheme and fragrance. A vigorous composition is the outstanding characteristic of Chughtai's art which has deeply influenced Modern Indian Art.

The Virtuous (Plate No. 17)

Chughtai always desired to convey the message of God to man through his paintings. He is very much influenced by the beauty and fragrance of life that helps the artist in his creative works. As a great designer and a perfect craftsman, he composes his paintings rhythmically.

Unexpected effects of colour harmony balance light to dark-tones.

The Slave Girl (Plate No. 18)

His choice of the subject as well as the way in which he depicts it enables Chughtai to draw various unusual phases of life. Chughtai uses various hues and techniques to try new experiments, by which he gets excellent results.

Slave Girl, is an instance of Chughtai's refined sensibility. One can admire the plastic beauty of the figure and recognize the considerable success, the artist has achieved in painting the same.

Through the graceful posture of the figure of the Slave Girl, her vanity, and her personality the artist successfully reveals the depth of emotion and passion.

Figure is holding a pair of shoes of her mistress, symbolizing the characteristic charm of imperialism, a reminiscence of a past dynasty.

Under the Apple Tree (Plate No. 19)

Under the apple tree, comes memory of the artist's journey to the valley of Kashmir in 1929.

The green valley grows his mind as the apples grow in the valley. He has a vivid picture of the Kashmir landscape in his mind.

The Madonna of Kashmir, is looking towards the vast infinite distance, she lacks the power to give proper expression to the inner yearning of her heart.

In this picture the artist give expression of his democratic conception of the valley which has become an eternal example of human suffering and of the tyranny of barbaric rulers.

The Persian Idol (Plate No. 20)

This is a representation of romanticism of Chughtai, full of poetry and lyric. It has a glamour of colours, fragrance and dazzling perfection of a nice composition.

Chughtai as a master artist is gifted with extraordinary power of design and craftsmanship. This picture has been drawn with great love and affection. The brightest touches of colours and delicate tones are very sensitive and have a variety of mood. It seems to dissolve into a dream atmosphere.

This masterpiece is like a lyrical song, which has been composed in rhythmical lines and harmonious colours, along with green cypress trees in the background.

Fame (Plate No. 21)

In this picture the difference between inspirational and realistic art is very clear. Chughtai is both imaginative and creative artist.

Note the masterly handling of the fine qualities of light and dark which runs through out the whole picture. Amongst it, is sitting a graceful lady holding a burning lamp, giving the expression of her emotions. In fact this aspect of Chughtai's art inspires and attracts us, and enables us to understand the inner meaning and the artistic organization of his attempt.

Fame gives a measure of mankind and all the disruptive tendencies for the structure of the society. It is one of the early paintings of Chughtai and illustrates Dr. Tqbal's.

Eid Message (Plate No. 22)

This huge and large painting is one of the artist's early ambitious efforts. It also depicts the ancient tradition. It is a very impressive study. The seated old graceful lady with youngsters of the family around her looking and watching the Eid Moon, present a beautiful scene. Realism which characterizes the paintings of Chughtai come near to the feeling of the festival.

Modesty (Plate No. 23)

Modesty is the spirit of lustrous youth and characteristic of a pious woman. We feel its fragrance in the pictures of the pictures of Chughtai, who has achieved his place among the great artists of the world. The colour scheme of the subject is remarkable and expressive, painted in brilliantly pure varied hues. Decorative enrichments of the background with brilliant yellow colour, increased the charm of the figure.

The Mughal Princess (Plate No. 24)

Chughtai made many important paintings from Mughal history. He always paints with love and regard. In this painting he shows his tendency to express the glory of the great Mughals.

There are many vertical lines and contrast, which flourished with supreme quality and beauty. The artist frequently uses ornamentals elements and decorative patterns such as we find in many of his paintings.

The figures are admirably contrasted against their setting under the open air atmosphere in a typical Mughal Garden. Its colour scheme is an extraordinary rich, pure and harmonious rendering of the subject of the picture.

The painting was exhibited in India, the Royal Academy, London, Rega, Paris and Pakistan.

The Fragrance (Plate No. 25)

This picture is a fine and reared achievement of the artist. He has depicted the subject with exquisite success and mastery. It is an instance of Chughtai's artistic sense which enables him to produce colour harmony, rhythm of lines and tones. A subtle precision of design is the

characteristic features of all the paintings of Chughtai, but this painting is one of the best he has painted. It has been painted for an unusual angle and has essentially as its elements a mystical Eastern figure, pious, and sitting majestically alone in the calm atmosphere with the rosy pink drapery spreading over the space as a huge fan.

This is undoubtedly one of Chughtai's masterpieces.

Flask of Vanity (Plate No. 26)

Chughtai is an artist of rare merits. His style and composition always depicted his artistic experience. He draws decorative moods in some original forms. He finally showed an almost gay temperament in his studies of nature and human figures. In this picture you will find that he has depicted a new type of a graceful woman, standing with confidence. The dynamic arrangement of the figure also shows the calligraphic refinement. The artist has succeeded in drawing an extraordinary figure with technical skill. He is successful in keeping the harmony of colours and treatment. This painting deserves special attention on account of its perfection.

یک نظر آن گوہر نابے نگر
ناج را در زیر مہتابے نگر
از محبت جذبہ ہا گردد مہلند
ارج می گیرد از دنا ارجمند
اگر فردوس بر روی زمین است
ہمین است وہمین است وہمین است
ترا جلال و جمال مرد خدا کی دلیل
وہ بھی جلیل و جمیل تو بھی جلیل و جمیل
مرد خدا کا عمل عشق سے صاحب فروغ
عشق ہے اصل حیات موت ہے اس پر حرام

The story Teller



PL - 15

یک نظر آن گوہر تابے نگر
تاج رادر زیر مہتابے نگر

زقرآن پیشِ خود آئینہ آویز
دگرگوں گشتہ باز خویش بگریز
خرد دیکھے اگر دل کی نگہ سے
فقط اک گردشِ شام و سحر ہے
جہاں روشن ہے نورِ لا الہ سے
اگر دیکھیں فروغِ مہر و مہ سے

This Nazam is written in 1905 taken from Kulliat-e-Iqbal. Published from Iqbal Academy Lahore Pakistan in 1968 Page. No. 322.

The Still Life



PL - 16

ہاتھ ہے اللہ کا بندہ مومن کا ہاتھ
غالب و کار آفریں، کار کشا کار ساز

اگر ہو ذوق تو خلوت میں پڑھ زبورِ عجم
 فتانِ نیم شبی لے لوائے راز نہیں
 میانِ آب و گل خلوت گزیدم
 ز افلاطون و فارابی پریدم
 نکر دم از کسے دریون چشم
 جہان را جز بہ چشم خود نہ دیدم
 نہ پیش من جہانِ رنگ و بوی رفت
 زمین و آسماں و چار سو رفت

*This Ghazal written in 1908 in Bal-e-Jibrit, taken from
 Kulliat-e-Iqbal, Published from Educational Book
 House Aligarh Page No. 39.*



Pl. no. 17

اے کہ ہے زیرِ فلک مثلِ شرِ تیری نمود
کون سمجھائے تجھے کیا ہیں مقامات و جود

من بسیمائے غلاماں فرّ سلطان دیدہ ام
شعلہ محمود از خاکِ ایاز آید بروں
جادوئے محمود کی تاثیر سے چشمِ ایاز
دیکھتی ہے حلقہ گردن میں سازِ دلبری
آدم از بے بصری بستگی آدم کرد
گوہرے داشت دے نذرِ قبا، وجم کرد

The Slave Girl



Pl. no. 18

من بسیمائے غلاماں فرسلاطال دیدہ ام
شعلہ محمود از خاکِ ایاز آید بروں

بہ فتال نہ لب کشودم کہ فضا اثر نہ دارد
غیم دل نگفتہ بہتر ہمہ کس جگر نہ دارد
چہ ندیدنی است اینجا کہ شرر جہان مارا
نفس نگاہ دارد نفسی دیگر نا دارد
تو ز راہ دیدہ بہ ضمیر ما گزشتی
مگر آنچنان گزشتی کہ نگہ خبر ندارد

This Ghazal is written in 1908 taken from Kulait-e-Iqbal. Published from Iqbal Academy Lahore, Pakistan in 1968 Page. 480.

Under the Apple Tree



PL - 19

به فغاں نہ لب کشودم کہ فغاں اثر نہ دارد
غم دل نگفتہ بہتر ہمہ کس جگر نہ دارد

زآب و گل خدا خوش پیکرے ساخت
جہان از ارم زیبا ترے ساخت
جس کی نمود دیکھی چشم ستارہ میں نے
خورشید میں قمر میں تاروں کی انجمن میں
جس کی چمک ہے پیدا جس کی جھک ہویدا
شبِ نیم کے موتیوں میں پھولوں کے پیرہن میں

Flask of vanity



PL - 20

زآب و گل خدا خوش پیکرے ساخت
جہانے از ارم زیباترے ساخت

جینا وہ کیا جو ہو نفسِ غیر پر مدار
شہرت کی زندگی کا بھروسہ بھی چھوڑ دے
لطفِ کلام کیا جو نہ ہو دل میں دردِ عشق
بسمل نہیں ہے تو تو تڑپنا بھی چھوڑ دے
تقلید کی روش سے تو بہتر ہے خود کشی
رستے میں ڈھونڈ خضر کا سودا بھی چھوڑ دے

*This Ghazal is written 1905 taken from Bang-e-Dara.
Published from Educational Book House Aligarh.
Page 107.*

The fame



PL - 21

جینا وہ کیا جو ہو نفسِ غیر پر مدار
شہرت کی زندگی کا بھر دسہ بھی چھوڑ دے

نتواں زچشم شوقِ امید اے ہلالِ عید
از صد نگہِ براہِ تو دلم نہ سادہ اند
تیری پیشانی پہ ہے تحریرِ پیامِ عید کا
شامِ تیری کیا ہے صبحِ عیش کی تمہی ہے
سرگزشتِ ملتِ بیضنا کا تو آئینہ ہے
اے مہ نو ہم کو تجھ سے الفتِ دیرینہ ہے
میری قسمت میں ہم آغوشی اسی رایت کی ہے
حسنِ روزِ افروزوں سے تیرے ابروِ ملت کی ہے

This Nazam is written in 1905 taken from Bang-e-Dara. Published from Educational Book House Aligarh. Page 181.

Eid Message



Pl. no. 22

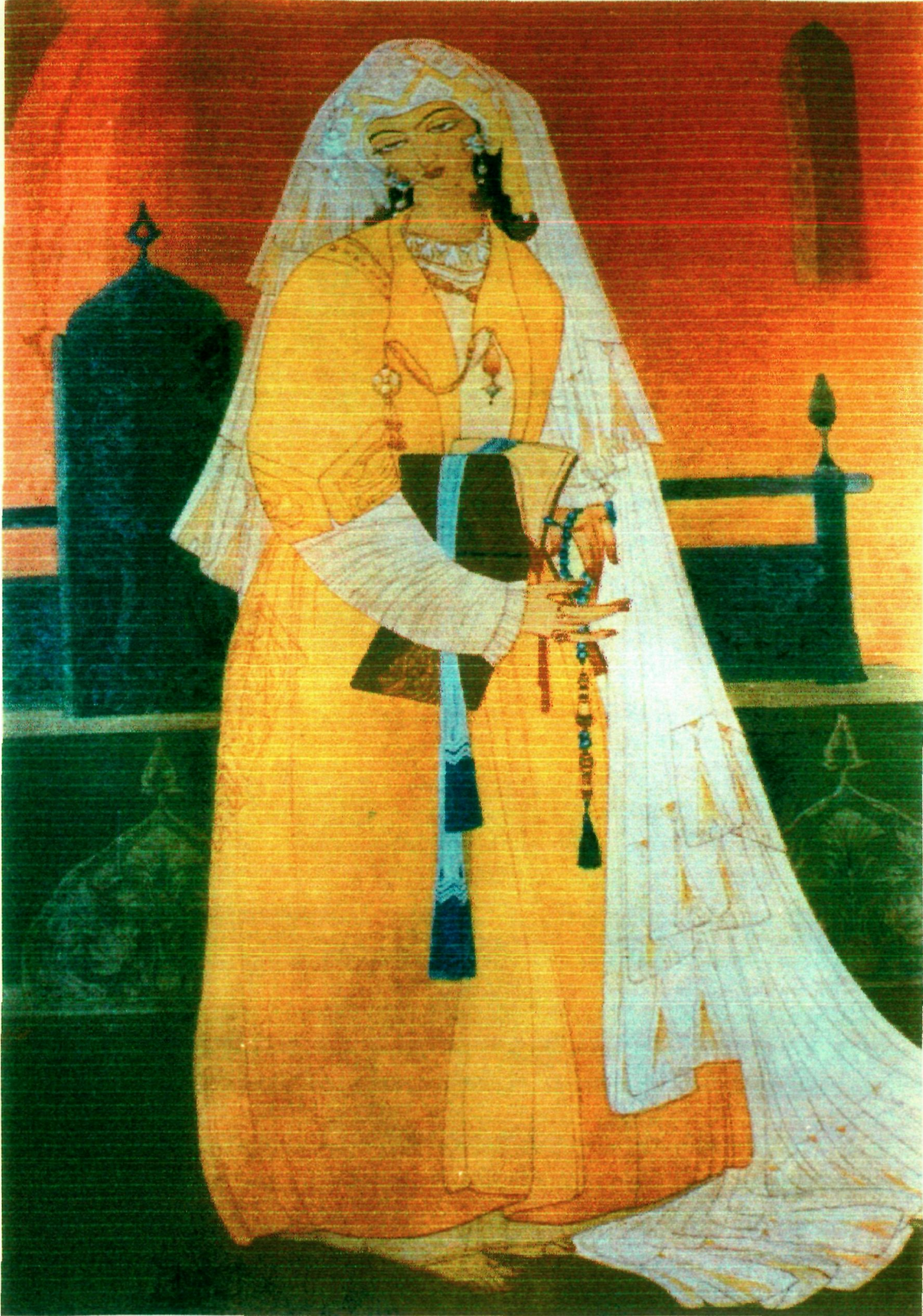
نتواں زچشم شوقِ امید اے ہلالِ عید
از صد نگہِ براہِ تو دایہ نہ سادہ اند

موتی سمجھ کے شانِ کریمی نے چن لئے
 قطرے جو تھے مرے عرقِ انفعال کے
 یہ حکمتِ ملکوتی، یہ عالم لا ہوتی
 حرم کے درد کا درماں نہیں تو کچھ بھی نہیں
 کبھی اے حقیقت منتظر نظر آلباسِ مجاز میں
 کہ ہزاروں سجدے ٹپ رہے ہیں مری جبینِ نیاز میں
 جلوہ حسن کہ ہے جس سے تمنا بے تاب
 پالتا ہے جسے آغوشِ تخیل میں شباب

(۱۲۱)

This Ghazal is written in 1905 taken from Bang-e-Dara.
 Published from Thalib Academy Lahore Pakistan.
 Page 312.

یہ غزل نہیں ہے



موتی سمجھ کے شانِ کریمی نے چن لئے
قطرے جو تھے مرے عرقِ انفعال کے

اے اہل نظر ذوقِ نظر خوب ہے لیکن
جوشے کی حقیقت کو نہ سمجھے وہ نظر کیا
مقصود ہنر سوز حیات ابدی ہے
یہ ایک نفس یا دو نفس مثلِ شرر کیا
بے معجزہ دنیا میں ابھرتی نہیں قومیں
جو ضربِ کلیبی نہیں رکھتا وہ ہنر کیا

(122)

This Nazam is written in 1910 taken from Zarb-e-Karim. Published from Educational Book House, Aligarh Page 118.

The Mughal Princes



PL - 24

بہارتاہ گلستاں کشید بزم سرود
نوائے گل بلبل شوریدہ چشم غنچہ کشود

ریاضِ ہستی کے ذرّے ذرّے سے ہے محبت کا جلوہ پیدا
حقیقتِ گل کو تو جو سمجھے تو یہ بھی پیماں ہے رنگ و بو کا
محفلِ قدرت ہے اک دریا بے پایاںِ حُسن
آنکھ اگر دیکھے تو ہر قطرے میں ہے طوفانِ حُسن
چشمِ کہسار میں دریا کی آزادی میں حُسن
شہر میں صحرا میں ویرانے میں آبادی میں حُسن

(123)

*This Ghazal is taken from Bang-e-Dara written in 1905.
Published from by Educational book House, Aligarh.
Page No. 137.*

The Fragnance



PL - 25

ریاضِ ہستی کے ذرے ذرے سے ہے محبت کا جلوہ پیدا
حقیقتِ گل کو تو جو سمجھے تو یہ بھی پیمیاں ہے رنگ و بو کا

پھر چراغِ لالہ سے روشن ہوئے کوہ و دمن
مجھ کو پھر نغموں پہ اکسانے لگا مرغِ چمن
پھول ہیں صحرا میں یا پریاں قطار اند قطار
اودے اودے، نیلے نیلے، پیلے پیلے، پیرہن
برگ گل پر رکھ گئی شبنم کا موتی بادِ صبح
اور چمکاتی ہے اس موتی کو سورج کی کرن
حُسن بے پروا کو اپنی بے جہابی کے لئے
ہوں اگر شہروں سے پیارے تو شہر اچھے کہ بن

The Persian Idol



Pl no. 26

بیا که بیلِ شوریس نغمه پرداز است
عروسِ لاله سرا پا کرشمه دناز است

Omar Khayyam and Chughtai

*Tram indeed is gone with all his Rose,
and Jamshyd's Seven-ring Cup where no one
knows;*

*But still a Ruby Gushes for the vine,
And many a Garden by the water blows.*

Chughtai executed romantic theme in a very subtle manner and from the very beginning he was inclined to portray the themes based on the beauty of earthly love.

Heer and Ranjha

to immortal love of Heer-Ranjha, is the Punjab's most popular romantic tale. Daughter of a Rajput Syal landlord, Heer falls in love with Ranjha who shepherded her father's cattle for her sake, though himself the son of a rich landlord of Takhat Hazara, the love blossoms till the discovery and the irate father marries carrying Heer off to another man. Ranjha becomes an ascetic but finds herself unable to forget his lady love. Heer's condition is not

better. The circumstances bring the lovers together only to meet a tragic end.

The painting entitled the Rose Creeper depicts Heer and Ranjha. Ranjha is holding a creeper of roses in one hand and Heer and another. Both the lovers are lost in their thoughts and emotionally involved. These emotion are highly charged in another painting of Chughtai entitled *Kaif-I-hayat* means enjoying life, depicting Heer-Ranjha. In this Heer's head is posed upward and whose long hair is hanging on one side of the shoulder, which heightens her beauty whereas in Heer's head is shown downward and covered with the 'dupatta'. The painting entitled Heer Ranjha also shows lovers looking at each other's eyes. As usual Ranjha is holding a stick in his hand.

In Heer Ranjha, Heer and Ranjha are looking at other side of the scene. Both of them are standing against the tree trunk and are in a cheerful mood.

In lonely Ranjha, Ranjha is shown sitting and is waiting for Heer. He looks impatience and depressed. The moment of anxiety appears on his face. Punjabi 'Chappal' called 'Punjabi juti' and 'tambha' type 'dhoti'

two worn in the region of countryside of Punjab by men-folk is also visible in this painting. These paintings are the visual record of Punjabi culture.

Sohni & Mahiwal

Like the artists of Pahri miniatures, the characters of the Punjabi love stories also caught the imagination of Chughtai.

A tall married Punjabi woman, Sohni, seeing the 'Beautiful' daughter of Tulla, Potter, fell in love with Mahiwal, a merchant of Bukhara who visited their village to buy some good pottery. He pretended to become poor and Tulla helped him in appointing Mahiwal a grazer of buffaloes. But when her father came to know about their love affair, he discharged Mahiwal from his services and he started camping on the other side of the river bank. But Sohni - Mahiwal's love did not come to a halt. Sohni started visiting Mahiwal on the opposite side of river Chenab by using inverted earthenware pitcher as a float to see her lover. Once her sister-in-law got furious to see Sohni crossing the river with the help of a pot at night. She replaced the pitcher cunningly with that of unbaked clay, for the one she always put to use to float across the

river. The following day, the river was flowing in its full swing. Sohni was determined to visit her lover at night. Like earlier times, Sohni set for her journey, unaware of being the last. When she reached in the mid stream, the unbaked pitcher lost its consistency and was reduced to fragments leaving poor Sohni without support. She cried for Mahiwal who jumped into the river from the other direction to save her but Sohni was swept into a whirlpool and drowned before he reached her. Mahiwal also let himself drown alongwith her, to be united forever. M.S. Randhawa described:

"Her love and the ensuing tragedy touched the hearts of the people of India. Fazl Shah, the Punjabi poet of Sohni and Mahiwal in verse during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1824. But there must have been earlier versions because it had already become a favorite theme in Mughal and Rajput painting".

In these paintings entitled *Fresh Water*, *Sohni and Mahiwal*, *Her Love Life*, *Sohbi and Mahiwal* and *Hidden Thoughts*, Sohni is shown with the pitcher and Mahiwal like that of *Ranjha* is also depicted usually with stick in his hands. Though they were

Punjabis but they are shown in an unconventional dress of Punjab region thus adding his own flavor while constructing these compositions. The jackets worn over the loose garment by Mahiwal are apparent in other paintings of Chughtai. The head is tied with the cloth in a turban style through which the locks are peeping. The sashes adorned with decorative floral and geometrical designs are thrown around the waist and their ends hang down of the loose dress. Sohni is shown in Punjabi Kameez-Salwar and 'dupatta' with pitcher in her hands. The head is covered with the 'dupatta' and when 'dupatta' is left out a long plait is painted. In the painting entitled *Hidden Thoughts* (pl.99), she is wearing 'ghagra' and 'pyjama' with the 'dupatta' draped around her waist falling down from the head. She is carrying a pitcher on her head and holding it with both her hands. Heavy traditional jewellery worn by Sohni heightens her beauty.

Shirin and Farhad

Like other love stories Shirin and Farhad also captured the brush of Chughtai. He did not paint them in an illustrative form but placed them in his compositions in his own style.

Laila Majnu

Like other love legends Laila and Majnu also invite the attention of Chughtai and he painted many pictures related to the subject.

Chughtai has very carefully dealt with all characters in his small surface of creativity. He delineated royal portraits as well as ordinary beings with arm strength. His attitude towards his characters as well as his subject-matter is sincere. He understood the essence of the totality of form and transferred their feelings and emotions in such a way that these creative forms could be identified with their inner beings. Chughtai was a keen-eyed portraitist capable of executing every shade of characters with his supple line, refined colour and astonishing imagination.

End of the Day

It can be referred that a man in end of the Day is a Majnu when we see his bare body upto waist, but Majnu wandered on foot and not on came. And if he is a tired, lost voyager, the camel would have also looked drowsy and dropping, but he looks alert and fresh who is guarding his owner. The presence of camel, fully equipped

and his meagered image justifies the fact that he is a Punnu who escaped from his brother'. The composition, in which a man is downtrodden and lying in the desert with a camel standing besides him can be no other than Punnu who fell down unconscious after hearing of the tragic death of his beloved Sassi.

خیام اگر زباده مستی خوشباش
باساه رخی اگر نشنی خوشباس
چوں عاقبت کار جهان نیستی است
انکار که نیستی چو هوش خوشباش

چون در کذر م بباده شوئید مرا
تلقین ز شراب ناب گوئید مرا
خواهید روز حشر ما پید مرا
از خاک در میکده جوئید مرا

"Hidden Thoughts"



PL - 27



PL - 28

"Lonely Ranjha"

زلفین تو بامشکِ ختن بازی کرد
یا لعل لبِ تو روح دمسازی کرد
بالائے تر ابرو نسبت کردم
زاں روز سہی سرد سرا فرازی کرد

مکیں دلِ درمند دیوانہ من
ہشیار شد ز عشق جانانہ من
روزیکہ شراب عاشقی می دادند
در د خونِ جگر زدند پیمانہ من

Sohmi and Mahiwal



PL - 29



PL - 30

Laila in the Wilderness

گل گفت کہ من یوسف مصر چمنم
باقوت گراں مایہ دپُر زرد نہم
گفتم چو تو یوسفی نشانی بنانی
گفتا کہ بخو غرق فکریں نہم

گرد بادہ بہ کوہ درد ہی قص کنند
ناقص بود آنکہ بادہ را نقص کنند
از بادہ مرا تو بہ چہ مے فرمائی
روچست کہ اد تریست شخص لند

Lover's Vision



PL - 31



PL - 32

Love Life

برچهره گل نسیم تو روزخوست
در صحن چمن روی دل افروزخوست
ازدی که گذشت هر چه گوی خوش نیست
خوش باش وزدی مگو که امروزخوست

ما بقا نیم و فلک بعثت بار
از روی حقیقتی نه از روی محبت
یا زچہ ہی کنسیم بر نطع وجود
رفیتم یعنی عدم یک یک باز

End of the Day



PL-33

The Morning Star



PL-34

Chapter 4

Art, structure and composition of the Lyrico-paintings



Chapter-4

A true artist is always conscious of his responsibilities towards his people and humanity as a whole. Abdul Rehman Chughtai was always searching for new methods, medium and techniques to express his inner self, his emotions, desires and share his experiences with others with great intensity through the medium of colour and brush.

The subjects, he used for his colour and line were always appealing and stimulated the imaginative power of the viewer. "In all his work, whether early or recent, the dominant note is its architectonic quality. Besides figured work, his landscapes are so characteristically Indian and convey a deep sense of space and proportion in composition. His trees and flowers are animated with an almost human intention. His figures-men, women and children give the impression of life and carry their heads with determination."

Chughtai painted a variety of themes produced in Persian as well as in Hindu atmosphere. This subjects related to religious and non-religious are executed with great care. The characters related to the philosophy of Buddha and Hindu Mythology play a significant role in his art. The quatrains of Omar Khayyam, philosophical verse of Iqbal and the love-couplets of Mirza Ghalib also have their own role at play in the art of Chughtai. He also depicted nature and had painted still life's, birds, animals and portraits with great success. Most of his paintings, drawings, etchings were made as book illustrations. The artist imbued each paper he painted with a significance extending beyond the purely visual content. The love themes always fascinated Chughtai and whatever he depicted never failed to delight the viewer.

His works can be categorized in the following way:

Themes form Hindu Mythology, Buddhist philosophy and literature.

- i. Royal representation and portraits in general.*
- ii. Musical themes and love themes.*
- iii. Female portraits.*
- iv. Still life, Landscape, Birds and Animals*
- v. Love legends.*

i. *Themes from Hindu Mythology,
Buddhist Philosophy and Literature.*

Chughtai painted numerous paintings whose themes were drawn from the rich lore of Hindu Mythology and which received tributes and appreciation.

Chughtai's paintings related to Indian aspect of life were reproduced in Chughtai's *Indian Paintings*, a book published in 1951.

Chughtai portrayed numerous paintings on Radha and Krishna in various moods. One of his paintings, entitled gloomy Radha is in the collection of National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi and was reproduced in Chughtai's *Indian Painting*. It presents the figure in a graceful posture. The emotions and the balance of various linear rhythms are attained through the high lighting of the tilted head with sharp features and soft expression of Radhika against the softer colours and motifs of the background as well as the peeping of full moon through the leaves and branches.

Another painting, entitled with the flute which is with the national gallery of modern art, New Delhi has its

own beauty. In this painting, Lord Krishna is sitting all alone on the tree trunk and is wearing gray and black coloured 'dhoti'. Instead of peacock feather, Chughtai has painted pink lotus flower warped around his right arm. The 'pagri' is tied in a different way. He is shown holding flute in his right hand. The colour of his skin is outlined in yellow ochre rather than in blue, usually used for Krishna.

Chughtai's painting *Hirman Tota* is a subject taken from medieval Hindi Literature: *Padmavat*, a famous work by the poet Malik Mohammad Jyosi, based on Sufi learning's who had lived in the village of Jayas in Awadh (Uttar Pradesh) in the sixteenth century.

In *Hirman tota*, princess Padmavati is shown sitting on the terrace and is painted in Kangra style. She is looking into the mirror very carefully and her pet *Hirman Tota* sitting on her shoulder admires her beauty. The cage is placed near her. The fresh leaves of banana trees and two fully ripe fruits which look other than banana symbolize her youthfulness. The green leaves, green saree and green parrot are well depicted with a varied tones

of green. Two blank sheets of paper behind her shows that she might send her message to Raja of Chittor, Ratansen. It is housed in National Gallery of Modern Art, Delhi.

Chughtai also painted Buddhist themes and executed them in his own style.

Chughtai's picturisation of the legends of Buddha are profoundly influenced by Ajanta frescoes in its form and motif.

ii. Royal representation and portraits in general

Portraits enjoy an important and substantial position in Chughtai's paintings. In portraits female figures are shown playing musical instruments, dancing, carrying flowers, amusing themselves with birds, knitting, spinning, dreaming, bathing or at their toilette. In his paintings, male portraits are less in number, in comparison to the female ones. They generally represent warriors, historical and saintly characters or very ordinary human beings and sometimes totally imaginative figures take place on his picture surface. Chughtai very tastefully and sensitively

depicted all these varied characters. "There is a great variegation within his own vision and idioms of figural themes and their conception. His fanciful figures coming from his mental world of the dream-of-past and steeped in oriental feeling, moods, costumes and manners-romantic and mystified, reveal immense variety".

The romance of India which the painters of the court of Mughal, Rajput and Phari Princes portrayed so magnificently has come to life once again which is exemplified in some of the paintings of Chughtai especially while executing royal dignitaries. Chughtai painted many portraits of Mughal Emperors, Like Babar, Humayun, Jahangir & Noor Jahan, Akbar, Aurangzeb.

The commentary accompanying the painting in *Amal-e-Chughtai* reads as such:

"Chughtai, while portraying historical subjects has acquired a great knowledge of making. In the relaxed sitting of the Emperor Aurangzeb, there is a sympathetic understanding of the greatness of the Mughals.

In the paintings entitled *Sharfun-Nisha*. The virtuous, The Fragrance and Modesty are reproduced in

Amal-e-Chughtai. These graceful Mughal princesses are adorned with mystic clothes. These paintings do not present any scene or event but just pictures the extrinsic, glamorous costumes, frame of mind and traditional set up in a general way.

The royal turbans and head gears with jewels, the holy books either in their hands or placed beside them, the decorative sash tied around their waist, dagger, the cypress trees with other trees in the background, the terrace, reds, greens and pinks are all part of Chughtai's romantic vision which he presented with exquisite happiness. For the *Fragrance* the commentary in *Amal-e-Chughtai* reads as follows:

"It has been painted from an unusual angle and has essentially as its elements a mystical Eastern figure, pious, had sitting majestically alone in the calm atmosphere with the rosy pink drapery spreading over the space as a huge fan".

The emotional expressions are well captured by Chughtai that is why he is remembered as a romantic painter. Another painting *The Bound of Love* reproduced in *Amal-e-Chughtai* conveys the similar

expression of love but the passionate feeling is of higher degree in this painting. Chughtai was a keen eyed portraitist and capable of out-lining every shade of character with his supple line and sensitive colour. Chughtai portrayed a great many portraits of heroes of various periods and one of the most noteworthy is that of soldier known as general Tariq. Amir Khusrau (1253-1325) or prince Khusrau, the son of Turkish father and Indian mother, was born in Delhi when he became poet to the highly personalized court, as well as a musician and composer his ragas are still sung today. "Dide most Persian lyric poets, he was a mystic, extremely prolific, he wrote five Divans and a quintet (Khamseh) of epic romances imitation of those of Nizami." Prince Khusrau is housed in State Archaeological museum, Hyderabad deep contrast of detailed Persian style and bold modern approach.

Chughtai's painting entitled Bhakata Kabir is in the collection of State Archaeological Museum, Hyderabad.

Chughtai being a Muhammadan himself visualized Kabir as a Muslim. The beard face and his costume

identify his community. Bhakata Kabir is shown sitting on the mat under the shade of a tree. Chughtai painted a small book on Kabir's lap upside down which symbolises Kabir wisdom and intellect otherwise it is believed that he used to utter his verses orally in the language of humanity. The orange colour provides a tinge of holiness which pervades the atmosphere of the painting.

Chughtai not only painted many sacred romantic, heroic compositions within tense dramatic feeling but he also painted portraits of ordinary people

iii. Musical themes and Love themes

In India, music has always been considered as a requisite art forming part of the general and spiritual culture of the human being. Chughtai also painted many compositions based on musical themes. "Being a gifted artist, sometimes, he paints unusual pictures which depict vividly various unexpected aspects of our history. His subjects always stimulate his creative power".

Ishaq Moosli is reproduced in *Amal-e-Chughtai* and the above quoted commentary accompanies it. Ishaq Moosli was famous musician in the court of Khalifa

Harun al-Rashid, an emperor who reigned over glittering Baghdad. He patronized artists. Musicians, poets and painters in his empire. The wealth and culture of Baghdad reached its zenith under the reign of Harun al-Rashid (Ad 786-809).this era is regarded as the "Golden Age" of Islam. Science and the Fine arts flourished. Mathematics and Medicine advanced in a period when Europe was relatively backward⁵. Chughtai depicted Harun-al-Rashid in a very aristocratic manner with the sword in his hand in his painting entitled Khalifa Harun al-Rashid. Ishaq Moosli was the most celebrated Musician of his time (whose life was) identified with wine and brilliance of song, (and who lived from the wealth of the court as was to be expected⁷. In the painting Ishaq Moosli he is holding an instrument 'Sitar'⁸, with stretching his arms. "The invention of the 'Sitar' is attributed to Amir Khusrû, a famous poet and singer who was attached to the court of Sultan Ala-ud-din Khilji, of Delhi (1295-1315).The principles of the 'sitar' are similar to those of the 'Vina', but the 'Sitar' is a simpler and more portable instrument, as it has no curved neck nor gourd attachment⁹ like that of a picture Ragini. Ishaq Moosli is sitting on the floor by spreading his

huge dress all around in a circle. In the background one of the two figures is holding a book painted gently in subdued colours. The bottle and jar of wine are placed beside these figures and they are fully enraptured by Ishaq Moosli's melodious renderings. Chughtai matched the verse of Iqbal in this painting reproduced in *Amal-e-Chughtai* as follow:

"A melody must be nourished on madness of love.

It should be like fire dissolved in Life-Blood.

A melody that has no meaning is lifeless.

Its warmth is only from a dying fire."

"But Music (as distinguished for the lyric shaped as song) works from the beginning with non-denotational sound. It can move faster towards psychic states with needling the mediation of objective reference"⁴⁰ Some of the paintings of Chughtai based on Music themes, however refer to this kind of philosophy.

Islam made contribution to the Hindu religious thought through Sufism, the subsequent development of Sufism took place in Iran. "The passion of love affords the most obvious analogy to the fits of ecstasy which Sufis

have always associated with gnosis and sainthood. In the early period recitation of the 'Quran' was regularly employed to bring about the trancestate, and soon love-poems began to be used for the same purpose. Many odes of this kind were chanted with or without the accompaniment of music, in order to stimulate enthusiasm and induced ecstasy. The aim of the writers is not only to convey transcendental truth, but also to create by their art a beautiful dream-world capable of suggesting the infinite and inexpressible, of attuning the soul to heavenly baronies, and of preparing it for the highest mystical experience⁵³.

Chughtai painted Omar Khayyam's Rubaiyat with great warmth and zeal like those of Ghalib's love Ghazals and Iqbal's philosophical verses. Chughtai rendered the quatrains of Omar Khayyam from the very beginning of his artistic career and painted invariably throughout his career towards perfection. Omar Khayyam (11th cent. 1122) was a native of Nishapur, he was a philosopher, mathematician and the astronomer in charge of the observatory at meru. His real fame, however, is as the (more or less authentic) author of the Rubaiyat, an anthology and quatrains that have delighted the English

speaking world in the full translation by Edward Fitzgerald (1859)⁵⁴. Omar Khayyam was a Sufi mystic who framed eternal images in wordily aspects. Arif Chughtai observed that from 1916 onwards to his death, Chughtai had painted Omar Khayyam many a times but his latest version was composed of no less than sixty paintings on the subject of Omar Khayyam. He further claimed that "In it, he became virtually the first person of the East and Moslem to have done such extensive range for the quatrains and in its depth and beauty, unrivaled by none"⁵⁵.

In the painting from Omar Khayyam a poet is holding his beloved and they are positioned intimately. She is carrying a rose flower kept up side down in her palm. They are sitting together hand in hand. The tranquilized eyes of a poet and a diffused halo behind his head shows his transestate and the emotions are at heights. Both are wearing very loose balloon like clothiers with heads draped with the same cloth.

In Omar Khayyam the poet is sitting on his sitting on his terrace overlooking the Chinari trees painted with green and red leaves. His hands are stretched on

both sides and he is holding a 'Kalam' or brush in his hand. The red turban with baton, white sash on his brown loose coat are very well balanced with a red coloured terrace. The books and wine bottle are placed beside him. Wine and 'Saqi' (wine bearer). Are the themes of Omar Khayyam's quatrains and Chughtai's illustrations did full justice to these romantic feelings hidden in these Rubaiyats and effects are carefully achieved through concentration on the main theme.

Omar the Tent Maker is again a theme from Omar Khayyam. The poet, wearing hat like small cap on the head and a sash around his neck, is painted in the midst of red trees. These red trees suggest the burial desire of the forms. The passion of love is efficiently projected. Poet holding one bottle of wine and two big wine bottles are placed behind him. A female form is painted in the bottle symbolising the captured emotions. Another painting having theme entitled Omar Khayyam is in the collection of National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi. A lady is painted in a delicate manner with the dupatta flying in the air.

Love Themes

Chughtai was intensely motivated by the Persian, Mughal and Kangra paintings while the love theme was portrayed in the spirit of Kangra love paintings. The motifs he used were Persian. The Kangra painters who have so charmingly visualized the poetry of Keshav Das⁵⁶ in line and colour have made these creations immortal. In fact, it is Hindu 'Sringara' poetry, the poetry of passion, which provides key to Kangra paintings and these paintings are mostly love poems dressed in the form of line and colour. Similarly Ghalib's love poems arrested the imagination of Chughtai and he was elevated to visualize these poems. These love paintings portray passionate feelings of human being in a remarkable way and represent an achievement of the human spirit. Love is represented as 'Sringara' in literature. Keshav Das classifies 'Sanjoga' as Samjoga (Love in union) and Vijoga (Love in separation) and Chughtai's illustration of Ghalib's poetry mostly deals with Vijoga. 'The Vijog nayika', utka or Utkanthila, is the lovely heroin who expects and yearns for her lover and whose anxiety is aroused considerably at her lover's inability to keep his appointment with her at the

promised hour. Chughtai's paintings, *The Flame of Love* and *Vigil* ~~wasted~~ represent 'utka nayika'. *The Flame of Love* is based on the love poem of Ghalib which Chughtai illustrated with immense maturity. The lamp at the background is burning and showing its flame, a flame of love symbolising a ray of hope. It looks if the flick of the lamp and oaths hovering around the flame are only two alive objects and not the lady who seems to have reached the state of contemplation and has become motionless. The longingness to have a glimpse of her lover is fully expressed by showing her outstretched arms though in a desperate manner towards the window. The disheveled dark coloured coils of there hair which she is holding with her hands are rolling down from the 'nayika' of the flame of Love is still hopeful symbolized by the steady flame. In the extinguished flame. The lamp is fully burnt which shows that the 'nayika' held her breath till the last flick of the lamp but became motionless afterwards. Her face hidden between the coils of her hair and outstretched arms, the silence all over, tell her tale of agony. All the elements in the picture reconcile with one another in a state of suspended animation.

In Urdu romantic poetry, Shamman and a Parwana is mentioned innumerously by the poets. 'Shamman' (Flame) symbolizes beloved and 'Parwana' (moth) signifies the lover, who intends to be attracted by the Flame (beloved). Knowing well that it will be burnt, the moth still comes near the flame intentionally to get itself destroyed by the heat of the flame. Chughtai has very forcefully and successfully illustrated this theme in his paintings.

The subject of 'Shamman and Parwan' depicted in The same is reproduced in Amal-e-Chughtai is taken and presented in various characters in different atmosphere.

In For Love the lady is burning the lamp in is placing it on the pedestal by bending her body a bit. The moths are flying around the flame and some are lying dead on the floor. It is housed in Chughtai Museum Trust, Lahore.

Chughtai was in a habit of repeating his compositions in his paintings. Here in for Love, a painting reproduced in Chughtai's Paintings, the posture is more graceful than in the for Love. But the painting which is housed in Chughtai Museum Trust, Lahore entitled for Love has

less intricacy and lack the intensity of Chughtai's involvement for reproducing the earlier painting of Chughtai's Paintings, whereas apart from the perfection of its drawing, the paintings executed with a kind of knowing simplicity, the necessary, the necessary effect and emphasis.

Flame of Love is another painting in which Chughtai used 'chirag' and moths. A woman shown in Muslim costumes is holding a 'chirag' in her hand and the smoke is depicted with curved lines. The moths are hovering around the flame, a flame of love and are destroying themselves with its heat.

The Serenade is another painting reproduced in Muragga-Chughtai and happens to be the first print when opened for the left side of the book. The lady is leaning on the wall of the balcony to have a sight of her over, who is playing a musical instrument down behind the bushed. Well arranged leaves with decorative hangings are touching the balcony. The excessive decorative elements, which were missing earlier on the walls of the balcony and the tranquilized emotions of the lovers add great expressiveness to the romantic ghazals of Ghalib.

iv. Female Portraits

As I observed the female charm portrayed by Chughtai is not based on any specific model but on the account of his encounter with many women in his day to day life. I think he sublimated the essence of female beauty in his paintings and carried it out in his own style. Thus the formulae of female comeliness which we come across at Physico paintings show a perception condensed through the contemplation of many a beauty, remodelled and bedecked by his magnetic imagination.

In Chughtai's paintings, one is conscious of the unique combination of three elements - the actual present, a most prophetic vision, and a revival of the past. The faces of Chughtai's women contain both promise and history inextricably blended each with other.

Chughtai invariably painted single figures, sometimes lightly draped, sometimes heavily draped or sometimes heavily draped or semi nudes and even nudes. But as far as according to study the poses and attitudes are free, fanciful, whimsical, poetical and sometimes realistic. The man and woman of Chughtai have peculiar faces and

anatomy which he assimilated precisely after studying the art of Persia, Ajanta and Kangra.

Chughtai's female figure in Lyric paintings have elongated bodies and variety of faces which he painted according to their need. The forehead rises from the ridge of the nose, sometimes straight. High heavy lidded eyes, narrow half closed, fish and bird eyes, almond shaped eyes, arched penciled eye-brows; straight, apart edged and aquiline nose; flower-petalled lips, then sometimes round chins; narrow, short, round and long necks, heavy rounded bosoms and high shoulders; the hair waved on each side sometimes on forehead to reduce the height and width of the forehead, the winglet is falling down on either side of the shoulder, head covered with turban or dupatta or hair pulled back tightly to form a bun or plait. When we go through his deep study the above all exaggerated anatomy which occupies Chughtai's painting surface freely. The multitudinous features which Chughtai adopted at assorted levels have not deterred him to preserve his own identity which he successfully maintained throughout.

Chughtai tried to copy his own painting at later stage but failed to produce the same effect and vitality.

Here a few paintings are taken in which Chughtai's figures are being provided with flowers in their hands in different ways presented in varied situations. In many of his female portraits, Chughtai has shown them holding flowers. In a *Summer Rose* the figure is placed against a plain background and portrait painted in blue. Even the flower that she is holding supposed to be a rose is painted in light blue against a still lighter blue background.

Withered flower is one of his most sensitive works is portrait breathes affection and simplicity.

"One thing is certain and the rest is lies;

The flower that once has blown for ever dies."

Charm of the East was exhibited in the *Wembley art Exhibition*, London in 1924 and is recently reproduced, with the cortsey of *Princes of Wales Museum, Bombay*⁵⁸ where the painting is housed.

Another painting, *Charm of the East*, reproduced in *Amal-e-Chughtai* seems to have become the charm of Pakistan, whereas the earlier painting having the same title *Charm of the East* is purely eastern in its approach and spirit and was free from all boundaries. "Chughtai, the

great artist of our time aboard with great passion and devotion to produce the spirit of the East". The artist was far from any social and religious barriers which delimit the flight of an artist's imagination. At that time, he was uncontaminated by the spark of communal disharmony and was purely Indian at heart in thoughts and in action.⁶⁰ thought he introduced a few Muslim constituents in one of his earlier works *Returning from the Daragah* merely to make it look different from the Bengal school style. It was only after the partition in 1947 that his art became purely Muslim in content thus restricting his flight of fantasy to the minimum.

It was general practice in the Southern part of India. Where the girls were pushed to become devdasis and become slaves for whole life. Chughtai has also captured this very traditional custom of south by showing a devdasi who is devoted to God and submits her will to His way.

The commentary accompanying the painting reproduced in *Amal-e-Chughtai* is as follows:

Figure is holding a pair of shoes of her mistress, symbolizing the characteristic charm of Imperialism, a

reminiscence of past dynasty". Iqbal, who felt that it is better to die than to be a slave because without freedom, the soul becomes depressed.

All Slaves figures Chughtai has very delightfully presented with his brushstrokes. In Chughtai's paintings, pictorial expressions dominate the picture and in their aesthetic qualities can be acknowledged and enjoyed without knowing themes. In some paintings patches for the three leaves background suggest the Japanese water colour technique. Chughtai seems to have used this technique deliberately to create Japanese atmosphere.

Song of the Nightingale is full of musical qualities where a bird, nightingale is singing and enjoying sitting on the pointing finger of the damsel, its mistress, for whom it is singing. She is beaming with joy as her face indicates. The broad tree in red with white blossoms behind the lady intensifies the atmosphere of passion and creates symphonic rhythms.

Iqbal's verse for the painting in *Amal-e-Chughtai* communicates the plight of the old man. Chughtai has not depicted festivals of India very frequently. One of his pictures based on the Muharram Festival is found in the

collections of the State Archaeological Museum, Hyderabad. The Muslim Festival falls in the first month of the Muslim Calendar and 'Muharram' is the name of the first month. Another festival is also painted by Chughtai where the daughter, her mother and child are looking outside the balcony to have a view of moon.

Chughtai still Life Landscape, Birds and Animals

Still life is a picture of an arrangement of inanimate objects, shown with some degree of realism, which may also be intended by the artist to have symbolic as well as aesthetic content. The origins of the genre in Western art lie in Roman times, but it was not until the 16th century that it became an independent form. Dutch and Flemish painters in particular, developed it and still life later became a popular genre in France, culmination in the explorations of Cezanne, Picasso and Baroque.

Chughtai is not known for his Still Lives but for his creative figurative work. Though inanimate objects always associated with the figures in his compositions but these still motifs hardly have their absolute entity, apart from few still lifes executed in Aquatint and in Black

and white water colours i.e. *The Earth and Vase* but these are also not totally considered as Still Life's because both of these etchings have the human hands either holding the pot or touching the vase though motionlessly. Just two paintings contain absolute still objects which could be categorized as still life. These are *Spring Flowers* and *The Still Life*. It looks as if Chughtai concentrated his energy only in balancing the picture and overlooked the principle of balance in reality.

Another Still Life painting entitled *The Still Life* is reproduced in *Amal-e-Chughtai*. Chughtai painted various kinds of ewers in his composition. After the Islamic conquest of India in the 12th century, the use of the Islamic ewer and the Indian 'Lota' as traditional motifs in the visual art, emerged. During the Mughal period especially, elongated bottles, ewers of flower vases became a favourite element of decoration⁶⁷.

Many ewers of various sizes in a group are painted for the title cover of his book *Muraqqa-i-Chgutai*. These are placed behind the figure of a poet and all the ewers have oriental patterns.

Landscape

Nature as an independent subject has occasionally allured Chughtai like that of Still Life though his figures are mostly depicted amidst the landscape motifs whatever he painted was not on the spot studies but half imaginary and produced there after in the setting of his working studio⁶⁸. The enchanting natural beauty of Kashmir certainly captivated him and he acknowledged it in his paintings, be it under the Apple Tree Kashmir Valley or the Green Field or glimpse of Spring. The figures enjoy the natural surroundings of Kashmir.

Every artist has the right to see the things in his own perspective and present them accordingly. Chughtai painted these two landscapes, under the Tree (pl.60) and Kashmir Valley (pl.61) through the lens of his imagination contrary to the comment made by a critic in the Artist "Chughtai's whose outlook is romantic; he works he works as do most Oriental by rule of thumb rather than observations: he sees through the spectacles of his ancestors, rather than with his own unaided eyes".

Chughtai also captured the beauty of the desert elements of nature whenever Laila Majnu were to be

depicted. Chughtai masterly created his figurative composition with the help of natural motifs. Chughtai used these natural surrounding with a view to provide the emotional gravity to his characters. Chughtai wrote, *I am very fond of hunting and his particular interest has taken me around the land of the five rivers (the Punjab) and I feel a natural alliance for it. I belong to the soil*²⁴.

Or a direct treatment of landscape, to convince people as art, it needs to acquire moral meaning. Particularly important is the association of the love of nature with human simplicity and decency.

In golden days, pigeon was used as a messenger and was a symbol of love and peace like in *Shirin and Farahad* (pl.02) *A Mughal Princess* (pl. 190) *Salim and Anarkali* (pl.103) another painting entitled *two white pigeons* (Pl. 73) is in the collection of national Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi.

The Black Pigeons (pl. 74) is housed in the Punjab Arts Council, Lahore. The pigeons are painted in black and brown with pink beak and are depicted in their natural movement.

Barkha Rut means rainy season is reproduced in Chughtai's Indian Paintings reminds us of the Kangra miniature. The peacocks have elegantly spread their tall - feathers into gorgeous form and the fine workmanship on the rather depicts Chughtai's versatile talent in rendering the birds.

The Taj Mahal, the most beautiful monument built by emperor of his wife Mumtaz Mahal¹⁸. Whom he loved most is considered a symbol of human love. Chughtai wrote the verse "Shahjahan shed so many tears in the memory of Mumtaz Mahal and the Taj is one of those tears that become frozen"¹⁹. In the painting, entitled *The Story Teller*. The peacock is shown sitting on the branch of a tree with its huge tail feathers spread out, watching Taj though silently but inquisitively in moon-lit night. Light thus heightening the beauty of the white marbled Taj Mahal.

Foot notes

1. *Kashmira Singh, Introduction, p.14.*
2. "According to Sufi teachings, sincerity in temporal love. (*Ishq-I-Majazi*) can lead the aspirant towards divine love (*Ishq-I-haqiqi*)". This is what *Malik Muhammad Jayasi* tried to convey in his great epic by using non-Islamic, Hindu theme, employing Hindu characters and mythology, *Krishna La.. A unique hugqa-basein the national Museum of India depicting the padmaavat of Jayasi*. *Facets of Indian Art, p.264.*
3. *Krishan Lal, Facets of Indian Art, p.260.*
4. *A Nigerian, "Buddhism", world Religions, p.141*
5. "The unknown Chughtai". *M.A. Rahman Chughtai, Dec. 3-11, 1983, p.7.*
6. *It was an Arab dynasty of Caliphs (750-1258). The capital moved from Damascus to Baghdad. Achieved great fame and splendour under Harun al-Rashid and its was destroyed (1258) by Mangols*

sunder Nulagu Khan. Collins Concise Encyclopedia, p. I.

7. Alexandra papadopoulo. *Islam and Muslim Art*, p. 596.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 601.
9. Elinor W. Gadon. "Dara shikuh's mystical vision of Hindu Muslim Synthesis". *Facets of Indian Art*, p. 155.
10. Commentary. Ishaq Moolsi. *Amal-e-Chughtai*.
11. Nigolian. "Islam". *world Religions*, (London :Edward Arnold, 1975), p.98.
12. Malik Shams. M.A. Rahman Chughtai. Dec. 15, 1966- Jan. 1967, p.3.
13. Marshall Hodson. *the venture of Islam*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974, p. 294.
14. The Persian 'sita: is known in the Islamic world as the kemajne (kamandhe, kamanja) Today the Persian sitar is not played as frequently as in the past.. The three gut strings are tuned in the same way as the strings of the Indian 'Sarangi'. Sergio Paganelli.

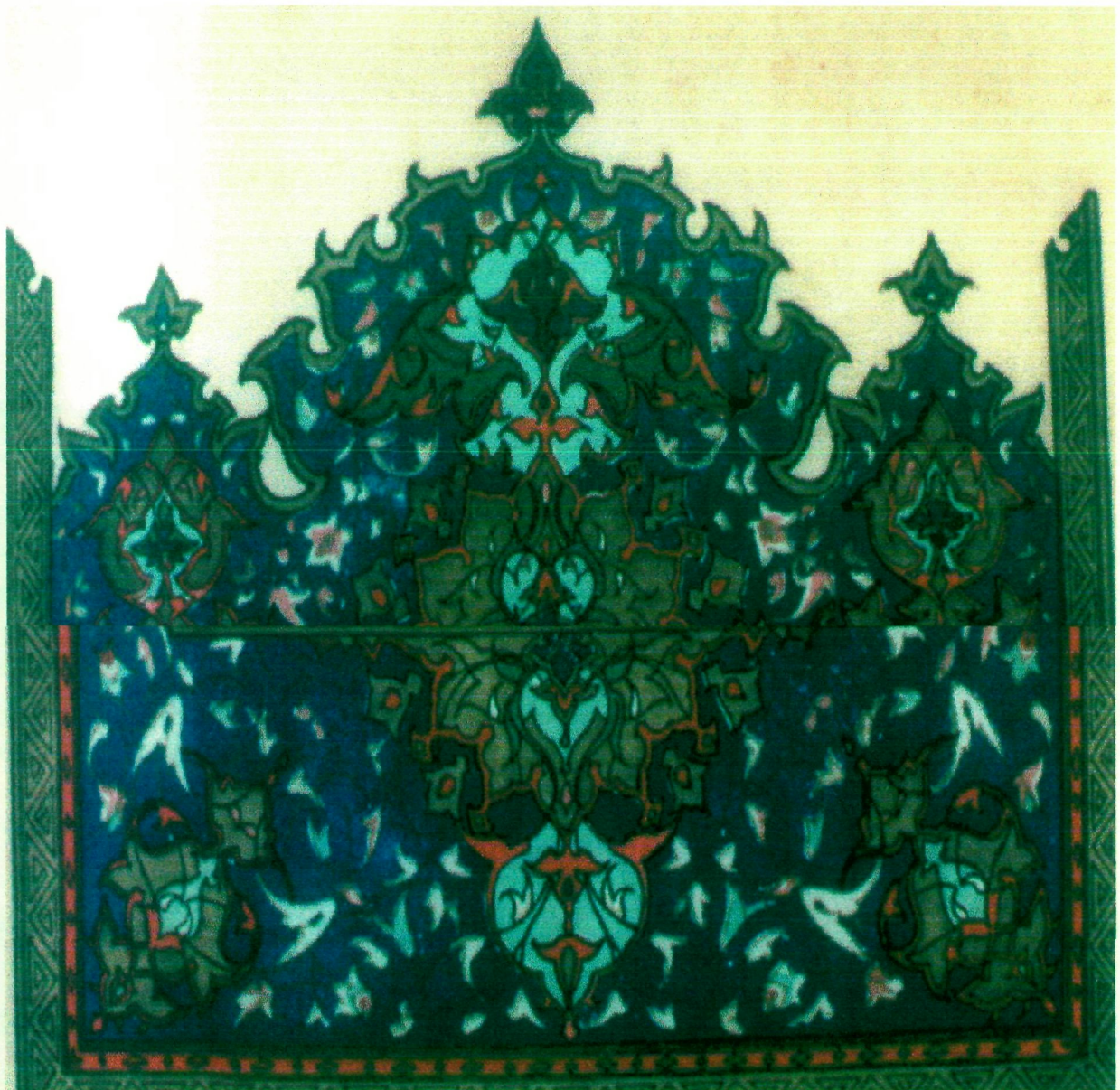
Musical Instruments from the Renaissance to the 19th century (London: Hamlyn House, 1970), p. 147.

15. Ethel Rosenthal. *The story of Indian Music and its Instruments*. (New Delhi: Oriental Books, 1970), p. 37.
16. Krishna Chaitanya. "Visualisation of Melodies in A history of Indian Painting Pakari Traditions. New Delhi: Abhinav, 1984), p. 144.
17. M.S. Randhawa and D.S. Randhawa. "The poetry of Pasion and the religion of love". Kishangarh painting. (M Bombay: Vakils and Simons Ltd., 1980). pp. 4-5.
18. Alexandra Papadopulo. *Islam and Muslim Art*. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976), p.600.
19. Personally communicated by Arif Chughtai during the interview in Oct. 1986. In Lahore.
20. Keshav Das (1580-1601) was the court poet of Raja Madhukar Shah of Orchha. His important works are the *Vigyan Gita*, the *Rasikapriya* and the *kavipriya*. The *Rasikapriya* was probably issued in

1591. M.S. Kandhawa. "Background of the Paintings, Hindi Love literature: the Rasikapriya of Keshav Das": Kangara Paintings on Love. p. 27.
21. It was early mentioned by Arif that his father always did his paintings in his studio.
22. M.A. Rahman Chughtai. "The unknown Chughtai". Islamabad, Dec. 8-11, 1983, p.8.
23. Commentary. Amal-e-Chughtai.
24. Arjam and Bano Begum whom he had given the title of Mumtaz Mahal, died in 1631, the bereaved emperor invited designers and craftsmen from all over India, Iran and Central Asia to construct a tomb that was to prove the ultimate achievement of Mughal architecture.
25. Chughtai. "My Paintings".

Chapter 5

*Important poets
(Galib, Iqbal and Omar Khayyam)
as a source of Mannerism to
Chughtai's Lyrico-Paintings*



Chapter-5

Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib

Few poets in the world has acquired such eminence as Ghalib.

A parameter from which his world wide popularity can be gauged is that his birth centenary was celebrated in such far off places as Raode-de-jenerio & Lima. His works have been Translated in most major languages of the world.

Born at Agra. On 27 Dec. 1797. His grand father Qugan came to India from Samarkand.

He was a military adventurer employed at different times with the Mughal Shah Alam & the Maharaj of Jaipur. His two sons Abdullah Beg Khan & Nasrullah Beg. Khan were also, like their father, mercenaries. His father Abdullah Beg Khan died when Ghalib was four years of age. After his death N. Beg. looked after the family of his

deceased brother consisting of Ghalib. His younger brother and sister Nasrullah Beg. also died two years later and their after Ghalib's maternal grand parents looked after him.

One Sheikhmuazzam, who was a learned scholar of Agra was Ghalib's teacher in the beginning Ghalib also attendant a Madersa, run by Mir Azam Ali. It is however significant to note that Ghalib never acknowledge any one as a Ustad.

Ghalib started writing Persian poetry at the age of 9 years. Persian was his first love. He was never proud of is Urdu poetry and declared that his real poetry was in Persian. However he has written in Urdu as well in his early age. Ali has recorded that one Kanhayya Lal has secured a Masnavi in Urdu written by Ghalib at the age of 9 years .

On eighth August 1810 Ghalib was married to Umrao Begum daughter of Ellahi Baksh. He was not even 13 at that time. There after he shifted to Delhi. Ghalib was though out his life in financial difficulties and a major part of his life was spent seeking grant from British administration. He was throughout under debt and it is estimated that the amount which he owed was Rs. 40000. One of the major items of expenditure was wine as Ghalib was a

customed to taking wine.

Ghalib has also been recognized as a prose writers, and his prose comprises of his letters. His friends published the compilation of his letter (*ohde Hind*) in 1868 during his life time. Another extensive collection *Urdu-e-muallah* was published after his death. There after a collection of Ghalib's letters was published in 1957, under the name of "*Khutoote Ghalib*".

One of the prominent traits of Ghalib's poetry is that he never wrote about politics. His poetry was primarily traditional in character relating to love and Romance. Ghalib's poetry is in the classical moulds and has universal appeal. He had the God given gift of poetry and has also indicated in one of his verses that his poetry is inspirational

"Aate hain Ghalib se yeh mazame khayal main;

Ghalib sweet- khami naawa sarosh hai."

Ghalib the ideas from my poems descend from the heavens and I write what the angel hums into my ears. Initially Ghalib wrote in a difficult language and the content of the verses was also a little obscure. A couplet may be cited as an example:

*"Nagsh faryadi hai kiski shakhsie teheri ka,
Kakzi hai parahan har paikare tasveer ka."*

A literary translation would be "who has created beautiful impressions which cry out for themselves" and every picture has garment of a paper. Subsequently he wrote number of poems in a very simple language which acquired great popularity

For example:

*"Aage aate thi hale dil pe hansii
Ab kisi bat per naheen aate"*

Ghalib was the last representative of the intellectual and aesthetic achievements of Mughal culture in India. The quality and tone of literature is always related to the culture of which the author is a part, and the aesthetic situation is largely a recreation of the pattern of emotions experienced in life. Ghalib's poetry, sophisticated and sometimes obscure and oblique, expresses the cumulative experience of a very sensitive soul

Ghalib in his youth was much attracted by the sophisticated style, and his often quaint images which

reverberated in the memory through their indefinable emotional effect.

In his early poetry, Ghalib's use of symbolism and imagery tends to be more intellectual than emotional. He had to wait for maturity to give full expression to the wisdom gathered from his own experience. The artist, capable of gaining knowledge and experience from all the sources that life offers, finds himself in a different world in every decade of his life, or rather, he sees the same world with different eyes. Therefore the material of his art, and the manner of its presentation is continually renewed. A great poet must have other interests in life besides poetry, in order to nourish his creative imagination. The poetry of the ivory tower is without vitality. A poet is a poet because he has the capacity to turn his dominant interests, including his thought processes, into poetry.

The creative output of Ghalib warrants full and elaborate examination by our generation. His use of symbol and imagery give to his poetry a modern air. Even his ambiguities and obliquity are modern in the sense that they give us insight into something we know and recognise as

contemporary reality. It seems as if he were addressing the present generation when he ruefully exclaimed:-

My songs are prompted by delight
In the heat of my ideas;
I am the nightingale
Of the flower-garden of the future.

His poetry is not discursive; it does not describe, but reveals: It is obscure in the same way that one's feelings are obscure. His creative imagination clothes the emotion with life. Sensation and emotion fuse and ideas become concentrated. Ghalib's poetry is primarily perceptive, not logical thought. His seemingly intellectual and analytical argument is in reality a subtle form of imaginative reasoning, transmuting thought into feeling.

Asad, my shadow
Runs from me like smoke;
who can stay near
To such a fiery soul as I?

The poet's imaginative appreciation of beauty, and sensitive reaction to it, produce the vision of "glorious manifestation". The beautiful object, in spite of being external to the beholder, is always soaked in subjectivity. It is in the

very nature of beauty to manifest itself in order to attract the attention of the lover.

*Nonchalant beauty is a buyer
of the waves of glorious appearance;
The mirror on her lap shows her anxiety
to create fresh methods of manifestation.*

In Ghalib's poetry beauty and love are considered together, since the concept of beauty embraces the power to stir the heart, the centre of all emotion. It is in the heart that the feelings for beauty is generated. The permanent fixation of the lover on the beloved can only be produced through an inflow of the lover's personality into that of the beloved. A great love always presupposes a vigorous ego which the lover exteriorises in the person of the beloved by transforming action of creative imagination. In Ghalib the identification of the lover and the beloved is so complete that he does not even want to have further longing for her:-

*We cannot even tolerate
Envy of ourselves;
We may die, but we do not want
To have further longing for her.*

In Ghalib, human and erotic love sometimes evokes the longing for transcendental beauty, as is expressed in the following verses imbued with spiritual and mystical imagery.

Who can tell

Whose is this glorious revelation?

He has let down a veil

Such as none can lift

It does not, of course, follow that, because Chughtai has Persian blood, he should therefore paint only Persian verses. Some of the masters of Mughal art in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were a Hindustani.

So far as Chughtai's art is concerned, India to him might as well be India of Akbar. It is perhaps as well for us that it is not. If it were, he might have created for us some thing else, and it might be some less delectable world than the Persian world of dream that is evoked in these lovely pages. He belongs to the tribe of romantics whose caravan is never fully content unless when it is camped by the river of yesterday or tomorrow. Another of the tribe, the English poet Keats, took refuge from his time in a Grecian world of his own making. But Chughtai carries his refuge about with him, and sets it visibly in our midst.

with the fine gesture of invitation to enter and enjoy which is manifest in this volume.

What some wealthy institution or patron, the young artist has himself accomplished results in a short but brilliant career (he is only twenty nine). He loves Ghalib, being himself a Poet; he loves his art; he knows that others love it; and he desires that the happiness of the possessors of his original paintings should be shared by a large circle of lovers of art. And, being a romantic, he desires no profit. He gives us this gallery of the most exquisite art, this product of his highest inspiration and craftsmanship and the finest achievement of colour reproduction, for what it costs.

For this the little world of lovers of pure painting will thank him. Were this introduction to this volume permitted to be more than a simple signal, it would dwell on what is within with greater enthusiasm; on the skill that has achieved perfect assurance and extraordinary ease and on the passionate reserve and chaste intensity that are perhaps the most distinctive contribution of the Persian and Mughal genius of the past and of Chughtai to day to the art of India and the world.

It is perhaps the "Oriental" character of Chughtai's pictures that will win admirers for them outside Asia. Their amazing technical skill is acceptable to all who are sensitive to excellence. But the remoteness from so called realism which Chughtai has deliberately cultivated will be specially acceptable to those who are now feeling the pull away from an alleged truthfulness to eye sight, towards the truth of the imagination. This has been the mission of the Oriental art for ages, and a study of a set of Persian paintings (of which good reproduction can now be readily obtained) side by side with these of Chughtai, will show where they are at one in their mood of gentle repose, in their pictorial lyricism, and where Chughtai, with the impulse of the creative artist who has the sense of tradition, has made his wholly delightful and individual contribution. He retains the distinctive mood and posture of the Persian tradition but gives his picture's a special quality of his own in lovely colour combination, in delicious lines that seem to be less lines of painting than of some inaudible poetry made visible, in folds of drapery that are never mere coverings to or discovering of the human body, but best men in the liturgy of beauty, in decorative backgrounds based on Saracenic architecture that call the imagination away from

the tyranny of the actual into free citizenship of the realm of romance.

Dr. Allama Iqbal (Poet of the East)

Born - 1873, - Dec. 1971.

Iqbal was not only a poet but a great philosopher who wrote poetry

As Iqbal was undoubtedly was the greatest poet of his time. He wrote poetry in Urdu and Persian both. His Persian poetry has been accorded highest acclaim even in Iran the home of Persian languages. His Urdu poetry has a pattern and style of its own which was hitherto unknown. Such lofty ideas had never been put in verse by early poets. His poetry acquires special significance because he was a philosopher in his own right. He incorporated concepts and ideals relating to social problems, political matters religion humanism & humanity in his poetry in a manner which no one had done before & that has made him. The greatest poet of all times.

His ideas and ideals inspired a whole generations and have presented before humankind. The way to peace & Salvation.

He instilled the feeling of patriotism amongst his country men through his poetry & one of the examples there of is the poem.

*"Sare Jahan se Acha Hindustan hamara
Hum bulbulein hain iski yeh Hindustan
Hamara"*

Which is invariably sung, on occasions of national celebration. His comments on diverse social problems & on the great personalities are also considered significant. A reference may be made here to a remark about Shakespeare

His dialogue with the almighty god contained a "Shikwaas Jawab Shikwa" is one of his great masters piece's, extremely profound and full of words of wisdom. The verses of Iqbal have been translated in various languages and different painters including Abdur Rehman Chughtai have produced paintings illustrating his couplets which have accured fame & name. The most famous book released by the name Amali Chughtai contains great paintings of the verses of the Iqbal. Abdur Rehman Chughtai gave a different colour and style to Iqbal's couplets.

The relation of Dr. Allama Iqbal and M.A. Rahman Chughtai is the subject of a detailed analysis in a paper prepared for the Centenary commemoration of Dr. Allama Iqbal in Delhi, India.

Suffice to say Dr. Allama Iqbal was a revered personality of Lahore, long before the artist was introduced to him. The subject of Art was new to Dr. Allama Iqbal and various discussions took place between the two personalities. This is highlighted in the dust-cover of the book "Bang-dara" as well as an announcement on the last page of an illustrated edition of the poet by M.A. Rahman Chughtai. The artist made many portraits of the poet, as well as many works illustrating his verses.

The words of Allama Iqbal, "I am not competent enough to judge the technical side of painting, and refer the reader to Dr. cousin's admirable introduction in which he has analyzed some of the more important aspects that are shaping Chughtai's artistic ideals. Iqbal said "All that I can say is that I look upon Arts as subservient to life and personality" Mohd. Iqbal expressed this view as far back as 1914 in Asrar-e-Khudi.

From this point of view some of the more recent paintings of Chughtai are indeed remarkable. The spiritual health of a people largely depends on the kind of inspiration which their poets and artists receive. But inspiration is not a matter of choice. It is a gift, the character of which cannot be critically judged by the recipient before accepting it. It comes to the individual unsolicited. For this reason the personality that receives and the life-quality of that which is received are matters of the utmost importance of mankind.

The artist is a blessing to mankind. He is an associate of God and feels the contact of Time in his soul. In the words of Fichte, he "sees all Nature full, large and abundant as opposed to him who sees all things thinner, smaller and emptier than they actually are". The modern age seeks inspiration from Nature.

And in so far as the cultural history of Islam is concerned, it is my belief that, with the single exception of Architecture, the art of Islam (Music, painting and even poetry is yet to be born- the art, that is to say, which aims at the human assimilation of divine attributes gives man infinite aspiration and finally wins for him the status of God's Representative on earth.

There are, however, indications to show that the young artist of Punjab is already on the way to feel his responsibility as an artist. He is only twenty-nine yet. What his art will become when he reached the mature age of forty, the future alone will disclose. Meanwhile all those who are interested in his work will keenly watch his forward movement.

But these two great personalities could not be suppressed and went forward in evolving a grander relation in their future.

Omar Khayyam

The Astronomer-Poet of Persi

Omar Khayyam was born at Naishapur in Khorassan in the latter half of eleventh century and died within the first Quarter of Twelfth century. The slender story of his life is curiously twined about that of two other very distinguished figures in their time and country, one of whom tells the story of all three. This was Nizam ul Mulk, Vizyr to Alp Arslan his son, and Malik Shah the Grandson, of Toghrul Beg the Tartar, who had wrested Persia from the feeble successor of Mahmud

the Great, and founded the Seljukian dynasty which finally roused Europe into the Crusades. This Nizam ul Mulk, in his Wasiyat or Testament which he wrote and left as a memorial for future Statesmen relates the following, as quoted in *Calcutta Review*, no. 59, from Mirkhond's *History of the Assassins*.

"One of the greatest of the wise men of Khnorassan was the Imam Mowaffak of Naishapur, a man highly honored and revered, may God bless his soul. His illustrious years exceeded eighty five, and it was the universal belief that every boy who read the Koran or studied the traditions in his presence would assuredly attain honor and happiness. For this cause did my father send me from Tus to Naishapur with Abd-us-Samad, the doctor of law, that I might employ myself in study and learning under the guidance of that illustrious teacher. Towards me he ever turned an eye of favour and kindness, and as his pupil I spent four years. When I first came there, I found two other pupils of my age who had also newly arrived, Hakim Omar Khayyam, and the ill-fated Ben Sabbah. Both were endowed with sharpness of wit and the highest natural powers; and we three formed a close

friendship together. When the Imam rose from his lectures, they used to join me, and we repeated to each other the lessons we had heard. Now Omar was a native of Naishapujr. Hasan Ben Sabbahs was, a man of austere life and practice, but heretical in his creed and doctrine. One day Hasan said to me and to Khayyam, 'It is a universal belief that the pupils of the Imam Mowaffak will attain name and fame. No, even if we all do not attain thereto, without doubt one of us will; what then shall be our mutual pledge and bond?' We answered, 'Be it what you please.' 'Well,' he said, 'let us make a vow, that to whomsoever this fortune falls, he shall share it equally with the rest, and reserve no pre-eminence for himself.' Be it so, we both replied and in those terms we mutually pledged our words. Years rolled on, and I went from Khorassan to Transoxiana and wandered to Ghazni and Kabul; and when I returned, I was invested with office, and rose to be administrator of affairs during the sultanate of Alp Arslan.

He goes on to state years passed by, and both his old school-friends found him out, and came and claimed a share in his good fortune, according to the school-day vow.

The vizier was generous and kept his word. Hasan demanded a place in the government, which the Sultan granted. He plunged into the maze of intrigue of an oriental court, and, failing in base attempt to supplant his benefactor, he was disgraced and fell. After many mishaps and wanderings, Hasan became the head of the Persian sect of the Ismailians, - a party of fanatics who had long survived murmured in obscurity, but rose to an evil eminence under the guidance of his strong and evil will. In A.D. 1090, he seized the castle of Alamut, in the province of Rudbar, which lies in the mountainous tract south of the Caspian Sea; and it was from this mountain home he obtained that evil celebrity among the Crusaders as the Old man of The Mountains, and spread terror through the Mohammedan world; and it is yet disputed whether the word Assassin, which they have left in the language of modern Europe as their dark memorial, is derived from the basbish, or opiate of hemp-leaves (the Indian brand), with which they maddened themselves to the sullen pitch of oriental desperation, or from the name of the founder of the dynasty, whom we have seen in his quite college days, at Naishapur. One of the countless victims of the Assassin's

dagger was Nizam-ul-Mulk himself, the old schoolboy friend.

'Omar Khayyam also came to the vizier to claim his share; not to ask for title or office. The greatest boon you can confer on me,' he said, 'is to let me live in a corner under the shadow of your fortune, to spread wide the advantages of Science, and pray for your long life and prosperity. The Vizier tells us, that when he found Omar was really sincere in his refusal, he pressed him no further, but granted him a yearly pension of 1200 mithkals of gold from the treasury of Naishapur.

'At Naishapur thus lived and died Omar Khayyam, 'busied,' adds the vizier, 'in winning knowledge of every kind, and especially in Astronomy, wherein he attained a very high pre-eminence. Under the sultanate of Malik Shah, he came to merv, and obtained great praise for his proficiency in science, and the Sultan showered favors upon him.'

'When Malik Shah decided to reform the calendar, Omar was one of the eight learned men employed to do it; the result was the jalali era (so called from jalal-ud-dill, one of the King's names) - 'a computation of times,' says Gibbo,

which surpasses the Julian, and approaches the accuracy of the Gregorian style.' He is also the author of some astronomical tables, entitled *ziji-Malikshahi*," and the French have lately republished and translated an Arabic Treatise of his Algebra.

"His Takhallus or poetical name (*Khayyam*) signifies a Tent-maker, and he is said to have at one time exercised that trade, perhaps before *Nizam-ul-Mulk*'s generosity raised him to independence. Many Persian poets similarly derive their names from their occupations; thus we have *Attar*, 'a druggist,' *Assar*, 'an oil presser,' etc., *Omar* himself alludes to his name in the following whimsical lines:-

"*Khayyam, who stitched the tents of science,
Has fallen in grief's furnace and been suddenly
burnt;*

*The shears of Fate have cut the tent ropes of his life,
and the broker of Hope has sold him for nothing!"*

"We have only one more anecdote to give of his life, and that relates to the closing years. It is told in the anonymous preface which is sometimes prefixed to his poems; it has been printed in the Persian in the Appendix to

Hyde's Vetus Persarum Religio, p. 499; and D'Herbelot alludes to it in his *Bibliothèque* under *Khiam*.

"It is written in the chronicles of the ancients that this king of the wise, Omar Khayyam, died at Naishapur in the year of the Hegira, 517 (AD 112) in science he was unrivaled, the paragon of his age. Khawajah Nizami of Samarcand, who was one of his pupils, relates the following story. 'I often used to hold conversations with my teacher, Omar Khayyam, in a garden; and one day he said to me, "My tomb shall be in a spot where the north wind may scatter roses over it." I wondered at the words he spoke, but I knew that his were no idle words. Years after, when I chanced to revisit Naishapur, I went to his final resting-place, and to it was just outside a garden, and trees laden with fruit stretched their boughs over the garden wall, and dropped their flowers upon his tomb, so that the stone was hidden under them'.

Thus far - without fear of Trespass - from the *Calcutta Review*. The writer of it, on reading in India this story of Omar's Grave, was reminded, he says, of Cicero's account of findings Archimedes Tomb at

Syracuse, buried in grass and weeds. I think Thoreau desired to have roses grow over him; a wish religiously fulfilled for him to the present day, I believe. However, to return to Omar,

Though the sultan "shower'd Favors upon him," Omar's Epicurean Audacity of thought and speech caused him to be regarded askance in his own Time and Country. He is said to have been especially hated and dreaded by the Sufis, whose practice he ridiculed, and whose Faith amounts little more than his own, when stripped of the Mysticism and formal recognition of Islamism under which Omar would not hide. Their Poets, including Hafiz, who are (with the exception of Firdausi) the most considerable in Persia, borrowed largely, indeed, of Omar's material, but turning it to a mystical Use more convenient to Themselves and the People they addressed; a Themselves and the People they addressed; a People quite as quick of Doubt as of Belief; as Keen of Bodily Sense as of Intellectual; and delighting in a cloudy composition of both, in which they could float luxuriously between Heaven and Earth, and this World and the next, on the wings of a poetical expression, that might serve indifferently for either.

Omar was too honest of Heart as well of Head for this. Having failed (however mistakenly) of finding any providence but Destiny, and any world but this, he set about making the most of it; preferring rather to soothe the soul through the Senses into Acquiescence with Things as he saw them than to perplex it with vain disquietude after what they might be. It has been seen, however, he very likely takes pleasure in exalting the gratification of Sense above that of the Intellect, in which he must have taken great delight, although it failed to answer the questions in which he, in common with all men, was most vitally interested.

For whatever reason, however, Omar, as before said, has never been popular in his own country, and therefore has been but scantily transmitted abroad. The MSS of his Poems mutilated beyond the average Casualties of Oriental Transcription, are so rare in the East as scarce to have reached westward at all, in spite of all the acquisitions of Arms, and Science. There is no copy at the India House, none at Bibliothèque National of Paris. We know but one in England: No. 140 of the Ouseley MSS at the Bodleian, written at Shiraz, A.D. 1460. This contains but 158 Rubaiyat. One in the

Asiatic society's Library at Calcutta (of which we have a copy) contains and yet incomplete) 516, though swelled to that by all kinds of Repetition and corruption. So Von Hammer speaks of his copy as containing about 200, while Dr. Springier catalogues the Lucknow MSS. At double that number. The Scribes, too, of the Oxford and Calcutta MSS, seem to do their work under a sort of Protest: each beginning with a Tetrastich (Whether genuiner not) taken out of its alphabetical order; the Oxford with one of Apology; the Calcutta with one of Expostulation, supposed (says a Notice prefixed to the MSS). To have arisen from a Dream, in which Omar's mother asked about his future fate. It may be rendered thus:

"Oh Thou who burn'st in Heart for those who burn
In Hell, whose fires thyself shall feed in Turn;
How long be crying, 'Mercy on them, god!'
Why, who art Thou to teach, and He to learn?"

The Bodleian Quatrain pleads Pantheism by way of Justification.

*'If I my self upon a looser Creed
Have loosely strung the Jewel of Good deed. Let
this one thin for my Attonement Plead;
That one for Two I never did misread.'*

The Reviewer to whom I owe the Particulars of Omar's life concludes his Review by comparing him with Lucretius, both as to natural Temper and Genius, and as acted upon by the circumstances in which he lived. Both indeed were men of subtle, strong, and cultivated Intellect, fine Imagination, and Hearts passionate for Truth and Justice; who justly revolted from their Country's false Religion, and false, or foolish, devotion to it; but who fell short of replacing what they subverted by such better hope as others.

Foot notes

1. *Amit Mukhopadhyay and Nirmalendu Das, "Graphic Art in India: 1850 to 1950", Graphic Art in India Since 1850, New Delhi: Lalit Kala Akademi, 1985, p.8.*
2. *Jaya Appasamy, "Contemporary Graphics in India", Graphic Art in India Since 850, p.21.*
3. *M.D. Taseer, introduction, p. 7.*
4. *Lithography is the major form of paleographic or surface painting. The design is not incised into a plate of black, but drawn on the surface of a lithographic stone. Invented in 1798 by alloys Senefelder, the process is based on the principle that grease and water repel each other. There are number of variations to the technique. Metal usually zinc, and plastic plates are often used instead of is stone. Whereas etching relies on acid rather than manual force to bite the design into the plate.*

Chapter 6

Cultural Entity of Lyrico-Paintings



Chapter-6

Lyrics are a very vital and significant part of any culture. It is difficult to visualize a culture completely devoid of lyrics. This is so because lyrics are one of the very important sources of philosophy, ethics and spiritualism. As one of the great poets said, poetry is the substances of all knowledge.

One of the essential yardstick for determination of cultural supremacy is the standard which lyrics have achieved in a particular society and civilization.

Transforming of lyrics into paintings provides polishing and sophistication to the cultural ethos. Those poets who have turned poetry into painting have a pride of place in our cultural history. A.R. Chughtai is one of them greatest lyrical painters in the world.

There has not been any befitting or appropriate scale prevailing, by which Chughtai's work could be classified on scientific basis. Arif Chughtai has put in great effort to document the works

but still irregularity of putting the year on the painting by the artist loses its evidence of development.

In 1919, Chughtai held his first Solo show of his works executed in purely Bengal School style in Lahore and received an admirable response. After this exposure, he became conscious of establishing his own identity and initiated himself to develop his own style, thereafter he adopted the Eastern and Western elements and blended them precisely. Thus originated his own distinct style and gradually he became a master of it. In 1920, simple motifs of Oriental architecture picturisation of various subjects, had started taking place in Chughtai's pictures. Thus the period of exploration, experiments, innovation and ascertainment began and its fragrance escalated all around.

The influence of Art Nouveau¹⁶, in which the decorative possibilities of the style are carried to brilliant heights is showing its sign and this can be considered as a transitional period for Chughtai. In England, it manifested in the art of Aubrey Beardsly (1872-1898) and Chughtai was being stimulated by his style. He assimilated these impressions with those of Bengal school style, Persian motifs and Japanese landscapes to strengthen his new style. This resulted in innumerable works of high quality.

**The Broad Oriental foundations of the art of M. A.*

Pahaman Chughtai are parallel to the basic impulses of the Bengal school, yet the Persian mode, a heritage of his ancestry is a major ingredient of his distinctive style".

1921 to 1928, till the publishing of Muragga-i-Chughtai, can be considered the transitional phase of Chughtai's creative career when he accumulated various impressions and produced innumerable works in different ways, and before he could strengthen them, the fluctuation in expression started appearing again though on progressive line.

Chughtai mentioned in Caravan n 1934, "If he had not published the book in 1928, he would not have done so forever" may be because of his change of style and adoption of other techniques. "Chughtai revitalize his traditions being in the web of a renaissance, and the first poet he chose to illustrate was no less a rebel than he was and that was Ghalib. The result was "Muragga-I-Chughtai" is (numerous prints of paintings and drawings gathered in special Album-Muragga).

Muragga-i-Chughtai was his first illustrated book based on the romantic couplets (Ghazals) of Mirza Ghalib, a Mughal poet of 19th century. The works reproduced in this phase especially in Muragga-i-Chughtai have the spirit of Oriental Persian miniatures of high degree

along with the technique of Japanese prints. He also assimilated curvilinear and ornate design of Art Nouveau movement of the west in the Muragga-paintings.

The conception of illustrating Ghalib's romantic couplets might have occurred to him while going through some of the Persian manuscripts illustrating the poems of great poet of Iran, Nuruddin Abdurakhan Jami. He painted the loves of Salaman and Abasi (1480), Yusuf and Zulakya (1483), Laila and Majnu (1484) with youthful passion. Most popular of all Jami's works are seven long poems joined under the single title of "Haft Aurang". The seven Thrones, or the constellation of Ursa Major. For more than 500 years these poems have indeed shone like seven brilliant stars in the sky of Persian-tadjik literature and manuscripts. "As a Sufi, Jami conceived the characters of these poems as symbols and the legends as allegories, but even in his day, they read like odes to the power and beauty of earthly love"⁹. Chughtai also painted the love legends like that of Laila and Majnu and others.

The Id Moon reproduced in Modern Review in 1923 and later carried out in Nairang-i-Khayyal in

which the old mother and her daughter are shown standing near the window of the balcony gazing at the Id Moon. He tried to forgo the overlaid washes, developed his own facial features, architectural perspective and surroundings. The illumination and the opaque highlights fully disappeared.

The same theme and the title Id Moon is reproduced in *Muraqqa-i-Chughtai* in 1928 and later in Chughtai's painting in 1936 is executed with better judgment of the colour application.

The enchanting Rubaiyats of Omar Khayyam persuaded him to illustrate them like those of Mirza Ghalib's couplets. He executed Omar Khayyam in this transitional phase of his life and later too in a much more mature style which perfectly matched the spirit and substance of the verses of Omar Khayyam. The title cover of *Dwan-e-Ghalib* or *Muraqqa-i-Chughtai* was also designed and signed' by Chughtai. The costumes of the poet who is sitting on the ground, large vases in the form of 'Surahi' stars and moths, though symbolic but suggestive are drawn in the manner of Art Nouveau thus strengthening his stylistic coordination with that of Beardsley.

The linear illustrations carried out in Muragga-i-Chughtai display the explicit influence of the explicit influence of the Western movement of Art Nouveau. The harmonious characteristics of Art Nouveau adopted with the romantic and lyrical verses of Ghalib's poetry thus expedite Chughtai to interlock these essentials steadfastly and exquisitely in his pictorial, linear drawings based on Ghalib's poetry. This was the period when Chughtai was fully captivated by verses of Ghalib and was craving to paint them and get them illustrated. The Art Nouveau and Oriental motifs were an ideal media to channelize his desire of doing so.

A delicate figure of woman bending towards the side of window, standing on the raised platform in the Balcony is painted in the pattern of Art Nouveau incorporated with motifs of Oriental world. The Persian motifs on the pillars, walls and in the background, the Japanese landscape, half cut tree which are taken as the roots and the space, are very well integrated.

Thus the decorative and abstract style shows striking parallels - in the moving lines and in the symbolic elements representing Ghalib's poetic verses. Two more prints carried

out in *Muragga-i-Chughtai* are a mixture of Oriental and Western art movement of *Art-Nouveau*.

In another illustration reproduced in *Muragga-i-Chughtai* an Oriental figure is drawn. A bearded man with a turban and loose robe touching almost the ground, is shown standing with his hands in upward position. The details of the tree and bushes are carved out. The designed border is also delineated all around the composition.

In the illustration a geometrical linear '*Hashiya*' (border is executed all around the composition further dividing the picture into two parts each serving its own implication. The upper part contains the Persian script and the rest is concentrated on the subject based on the romantic couplets of *Ghalib*. The couple who is shown in loose garments are sitting under the groves of the trees and are placed in the centre of the composition which is cut off from the background as well as from the foreground with the water drawn with the sharp, dark and forceful strokes.

Before the publication of illustrated *Muragga-i-Chughtai*, simply referred to as '*Muragga-period*', many new elements were introduced and the overlaid wash technique

of Bengal school of his earlier period 1920s was eliminated from the 'Muragga scene'.

The half opened dreamy eyes, arched eyebrows, thin small nose, pouting lips, dangling and cascade like hair peeping through the covered head dress, out stretched arms having miniature tendencies, elongated figures and lighter flesh tints, placing of various objects like musical instruments, birds, 'Surahi', book, lamp and moths are the motifs frequently augmented in Muragga paintings.

These paintings wear layers of Oriental and western flavours which were bridged very precisely and instinctively, therefore, establishing this new style of his own, more commonly known as "Chughtai Style". It has various influences but has the inborn charm of Indian tradition.

Chughtai's two tinted brush line drawings entitled Princess of Sahara had first appeared in Muragga-i-Chughtai in 1928 bearing the features of formative period of his style which he extended to the later period and produced some very delicate and sensitive art pieces.

By 1930, though Chughtai attained the superiority amongst his many contemporaries after Muragga's publication, yet he was segregated because he was being

labelled as a Muslim painter. At this very stage, Chughtai started taking interest in depicting subjects from Hindu Mythology and portrayed those characters precisely and thoughtfully. This was the major change apparent in the works of Chughtai in 1930s. He became master of the same by the end of the decade. *Amrit-Tal*, *Naraja*, *Tapasvi Buddha*, with the flute are the few tinted brush line drawings, which can be viewed in national Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi.

His technique was also influenced when he embarked for Europe. He learnt the technique of etching from Europe resulting in tremendous change in his approach towards his works which is reflected in his works of 1940s. His art underwent a profound change during his stay in Europe, consequently his drawings and etchings are distinguished on account of the creative strength and energy of his line.

In the early 1930s, Chughtai was involved in many fold activities. He published his first issue of *Caravan* in 1933 and designed the decorative borders of the pages of his books. In few designs, his art of calligraphy is also marked in a very accomplished manner (Plate XIII). Few

coloured designs are independently reproduced in *Amal-e-Chughtai* (pls. 257 to 262). Chughtai delivered posters, book covers and postal stamps which extract lot of patience and time. Postal stamps were executed after the division of the country for Pakistan in 1947. In mid 1940s, when Hindu-Muslim disturbance started shaking the nation it seems that Chughtai also could not isolate himself from this turmoil. So he painted mainly Muslim based characters especially Iqbal's verses which Chughtai wanted to illustrate as early as in 1930s when Iqbal was alive. This was later compiled in the form of a big volume in 1968 with the title "poet of the East and Chughtai or *Amal-e-Chughtai*" whose cover page was also designed by Chughtai himself.

Iqbal was a philosophic poet and Chughtai's paintings based on the philosophical themes of Iqbal had Muslim characters only, which did not portray the romantic or ornated Art Nouveau style like that of his maiden book *Muraqqa-i-Chughtai*.

The figures started taking larger space. The drapery is enlarged almost covering the whole paper surface. The elongated figures have sharp features and well defined hands

and sensitive colours justify their characters. Many of these paintings also have black and white shades.

At the end of mid-century, Chughtai's stylistic maturity reached its pinnacle. Chughtai's divergent choice of colour application remained fluctuating from his earlier phase to the last stage. One thing which remained constant was his using of heavy drapery on figures though the variety was evident with the change of character, but basic instinct is, followed all the time in his compositions.

Chughtai's varied choice of colour application, reduced to black and white tonal values in some of the paintings.

The distinct features of his later works of seasoned stage moved from its linearity to a simpler ones. The narrative content, wider use of foliage, animals and birds, elaborate Persian architecture, intricate application of colour and lime started evaporating. He streamlined the details and decorative approach. In the last decade of Chughtai's creative life, he seems to have chosen simple forms, lines and colours in his composition substituting accords and contrasts. The decorative approach started declining, evaporating. In the last decade of Chughtai's, creative life, he seems to have

chosen simple forms, lines and colours in his flat compositions substituting accords and contrast of colours.

Cultural entity of an artistic creation needs the height of awareness on the part of the poet, but this is not to be equated with analytical intelligence. As Claude stressed, "It can only cause us create". And again, "By the image the poet is like a man who ascends to higher ground and who sees all around him a vaster horizon, where relations are seen to establish themselves, relations which are not determined by logic or by the law of causality".

In fact the whole sphere of art lies in the ambiguous word 'good' whose meaning extends upwards towards the highest idea of perfection. Art aligns itself with ethics, because the aesthetic sensibility very much resembles the ethical susceptibility. Ethics aim at social harmony, which chisels the words to perfect shape in order to harmonize them with the inner emotional reality. Both have profound human significance because they aim at harmony, the basic principle both in life and art. The indivisibility of the problems of humanity includes within itself all spheres of life. The aesthetic and the ethical are really one in the imagination of the artist.

There seems to be a subtle equation between beauty, which is the subjective experience of value, and love, which gives rise to its enjoyment. Without this equation, aesthetic experience degenerates into sensation. In the contemplation of beauty, consciousness liberates itself from the conditioning of material life, and affirms, the freedom of the human spirit. In the aesthetic experience the poet cultivates the capacity to see with the eye of the imagination, and to identify himself with the representation of the object both in its particular and universal aspect. The artist endeavours to penetrate the depth of the object of beauty as well as the depth of his own consciousness, in order to awaken the spiritual sense which is the greatest of poetic attributes.

Before the reflection of her moon-faced beauty,

The mirror; essence flutters for flight;

Like particles of dust that fly up.

Through the window towards the sun.

Foot notes

1. Robert Schmutzler. *Art Nouveau*. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1964), p.183.
2. Ramachandra Rao. "M.A. Rahman Chughtai", *Modern Indian Painting*, p.30.
3. A pamphlet was introduced by Chughtai Academy of Arts, Lahore, on the occasion of the Exhibition of Chughtai's works soon after his death in 1975.
4. Mukaddima Ashrafi. *Jami in XVI Century Miniatures*. (Moscow), p.8.
5. Maharani of Cooch Bihar acquired this painting entitled *Omar Khayyam* and was published in *Nairang-ie Khayyat*.
6. Chughtai adopted triangle signature in late 1920s and later on changed to simpler ones.
7. These tinted brush-line drawings were later reproduced in Chughtai's Indian paintings.
8. Commentary, *The Arch of Mosque*, *Amal-e-Chughtai*.
9. *Dictionary of Fine Arts*, p.53.

Conclusion

Conclusion

Khan Bahadur Mohammad Abdul Rehman Chughtai will be living and remembered for ever as he has created some of the most beautiful artistic paintings that we have ever seen. Chughtai is not only a Pakistani he belongs to the world and his memory will always be kept in our hearts with warmth. I am deeply sad and sorry that the world of fine art and those people who appreciate it have lost this great man.

When Chughtai was a child, he learnt the art of oriental drawing from his uncle Baba Miran Bakhsh, a 'naggash' who laid the foundation of Oriental essentials in him, which Chughtai mastered it later on.

Chughtai was one of the innovative and contemporary artists of Indian renaissance whose work like those of Bengal school artists, stems from Abanindra Nath

Tagore.

Chughtai was the second son born in a Muslim family of Lahore and inherited the fine tastes from his fore-fathers. His grandfather was the architect of the last Sikh ruler of the Punjab, Maharaj Ranjit Singh. Earlier his great grandfather enjoyed the patronage of the Mughal Emperor Shahajhan in the capacity of Chief architect.

In 1900s Abanindra Nath Tagore, encouraged Indians to paint in a Indian manner who himself disentangled from the decorative extravagance of the flickering Patna school and revived the formulae and process of the ancient and individual Indian school. Chughtai's inclination towards Abanindra Nath Tagore's wash style made him a follower of Bengal school of art.

When Chughtai joined school of art in Lahore in 1911, he was very young and was not inclined towards any particular school or art but because of Samanendra Nath Gupta, who was one of the principle adherents of the Bengal school and a pupil of Abanindra Nath Tagore was appointed as a teacher in Mayo school of

art, Lahore. He was instinctively influenced by Bengal school style and one cannot deny this truth which is clearly visible in Chughtai's earlier works. At that time, in a way, the whole of India especially North part was under the impact of Bengal school and so was Chughtai. Though later in life he managed to disentangle himself from this strong art wind and established his own entity. He modified wash technique later on according to his own choice and requirement.

Chughtai, who although on specific issues quite aware of some of the various international artistic notion and trends, was nationalistic to the core, whenever he had to select between western trends and those of the orient without any hesitation he followed the later. On no account, it should be considered that he totally rejected all western artistic techniques and styles but he was only indifferent to some extent.

In 1920s he acquired the style of Art Nouveau. In England this 'new art' of the 1890s, manifested in the art of Aubrey Beardsley. Its origins were the linear traditions of Celtic art the Rococo, and Japanese art and architecture. Whenever he went to

Europe, he learnt etching technique which he very successfully carried on in his works after his return from Europe in 1936.

But despite his borrowing technique and style from alien sources, he stood as an island in him self. He developed his own style known as "Chughtai style" amalgamating decorative Persian elements, force of the *Kنگra* miniatures and local traditions in his work but at later stage, he simplified them by putting off the details and elaborate motifs in his paintings.

Chughtai's books, *Muraqqa-I-Chughtai* 1928, *Naqqash-I-Chughtai* 1835, *Chughtai's paintings* 1940, (all published on his press), *Chughtai's Indian paintings* 1951, S.A. Rahman's *Safar* 1964, *Amal-e-Chughtai* 1968, somehow I came to know that it can not fully provide evidence of Chughtai's chronological development but simply contribute the outline in dating down his work relatively. Some of the paintings used in *Chughtai's Indian paintings* 1951 or *Amal-e-Chughtai* 1968 were executed much earlier to their publication Like Iqbal's philosophy was given a shape in the form of painting much before his death in 1938, but the book illustrating

his verses was published only in 1968. Even the paintings reproduced in Chughtai's *Indian paintings 1951* were painted in 1930s. As referred by Chughtai in *Chughtai's Indian paintings* these paintings relate to his early art, which shows that the works reproduced in this book were not painted after the partition of the sub-continent when the ban for export and import of the articles of any kind was imposed. As I have mentioned above, the book was published in Delhi in 1951 and the works were lying in India before its partition, a few of them were with Dhomi Mal Dharam Das, and had been executed in 1930s when he was rendering the themes based on Hindu Mythology and literature and was also concentrating on linear work like those of the *Flute*, *Amrit-Tal* and *The Divine Cowherd*.

He depicted Hindu, Buddhist themes, characters taken from the *Manabharat* and the *Ramayana* executed 'nayak' and 'nayikas' of Barahamasa and Ragmala in his own way along with the hundreds of other Islamic historical characters and Sufi-tic themes which were devoted to mystic and philosophical problem. But in my topic I have selected only his imaginations.

was caught by the quatrains of Omar Khayyam, the romantic couplets of Mirza Ghalib and the inspiring poetry of Allama Iqbal. & I feel his compositions are a poetry of line and design breathing in an atmosphere of mystery with a decorative note. Chughtai's characters are mostly young, charming and captivating and presented in elongated and exaggerated forms in various moods. They are not always shown happy. Sometimes they are shown lost in their thought and look grim and tense as if they are burdened with the problems of day to day life. Mostly his female characters related to lyrics are delicate, beautiful and graceful, while male characters are firm, and majestic but their moods vary with the scene. Their costumes are generally large, overloaded with layers of drapery. Somewhere Turbans and headgear are meticulously drawn according to the need of the character whom Chughtai delineated with utmost care in his wash and tempera style in vibrant colors.

The emotional power of his lyrics paintings and line transforms his art into a mystic blissful drama, but oriental intricacy in his compositions also plays its role. This drama is aroused by the way wash and Tempera

technique is employed and Chughtai constantly and unceasingly probed for ways and means of improving his skill of line, colour and technique. The transparent repeated colour wash was consolidated with tempera to establish the luminosity and intensity of the pigment. His later colour sequences in Ghalib's verses in *Muraqqah* have the arousing force of the lyrics. Chughtai felt that this is not an ordinary wash technique nor it has been borrowed from anyone but it is the result of his many years trial and error and lot of hard labour.

After the partition in 1947, Chughtai was given a very significant role as an artist in this, newly, born nation called 'Pakistan'. In a way, this provided Chughtai many opportunities to express his multifolded interests. He was asked by the Government of Pakistan to design the letterhead and insignia for Pakistan national Television and Pakistan radio. He was also felicitated with many awards, medals and also the title of *Hilali-i-Imtiaz* in 1959 for his contribution to the enrichment of the Islamic culture through his art.

Apart from being an artist, he was a passionate collector of the original paintings relating to the period

of Mughal, Rajput, Kangra, Persian and even had specimens of European masters. He was a superb draftsman, poet, essayist, short story writer, calligraphist, and designer of many book jackets.

Towards the end of his life, he gathered criticism for not having kept pace with the Modern trend of art and was a broken hearted man. Chughtai was a man who devoted himself entirely to his creative effort in the field of art. He was born Indian, spent full fifty years of his best period as an Indian but breathed his last in Lahore as a Pakistani. Man-made boundaries did restrict the movements of ordinary citizens on both sides of the borders but Chughtai proved to be an exception. Who was equipped with the flight of imagination and beauty, love instinctive mind, force of line, vibrations of colour and intensity of technique. His ceaseless effort of projecting sensitive world of beauty in his lyrical paintings made Chughtai immortal.

Chughtai's life has been one of dedication and determination, and there are many lessons which we can learn from the career of this creative genius. One which particularly impresses and fascinates me personally is his

individuality and his confidence in his cultural roots. Without denying himself the benefit of an intelligent awareness of foreign trends and influences, which have shaped Eastern Art movements, he has stood firmly on his own ground, depicting all that is good and beautiful in our life and culture, and in a language of line and colour which has been understood and appreciated at home and abroad.

Chughtai is a great oriental, and is proud of being so. Unlike many other among us who are either unhappy or apologetic about it; he has shown, in his work, that for art to be genuine and universal, it must have an authentic locale, it must belong somewhere, to a land, or to a people. I commend this most emphatically to our artists and creative people that on them revolves the responsibility of rediscovering the soul of the East and depicting and interpreting its many splendid facets in all its beauty and glory.

Chughtai has won a foremost place among modern Indian Artists. He is a master of exquisite line in brush or pencil. Chughtai could scarcely escape the magic charm of lyrics. He has to his credit many studies of

Omar Khayyam, and all of them are of a quality not easily met with. The technical merits of the picture are quite in keeping with the subject treated. His romantic sentiment and invention are undeniable.

It is refreshing to find a body of work of this caliber in India at the present time. Chughtai carries on the Eastern tradition of impeccable draftsmanship which reaches its fines heights of simplification, perhaps in the great Chinese and Japanese Masters. Chughtai's works show an advance over much of the insipid and shineless output of his contemporaries which ought to be welcome as a sign of the time.

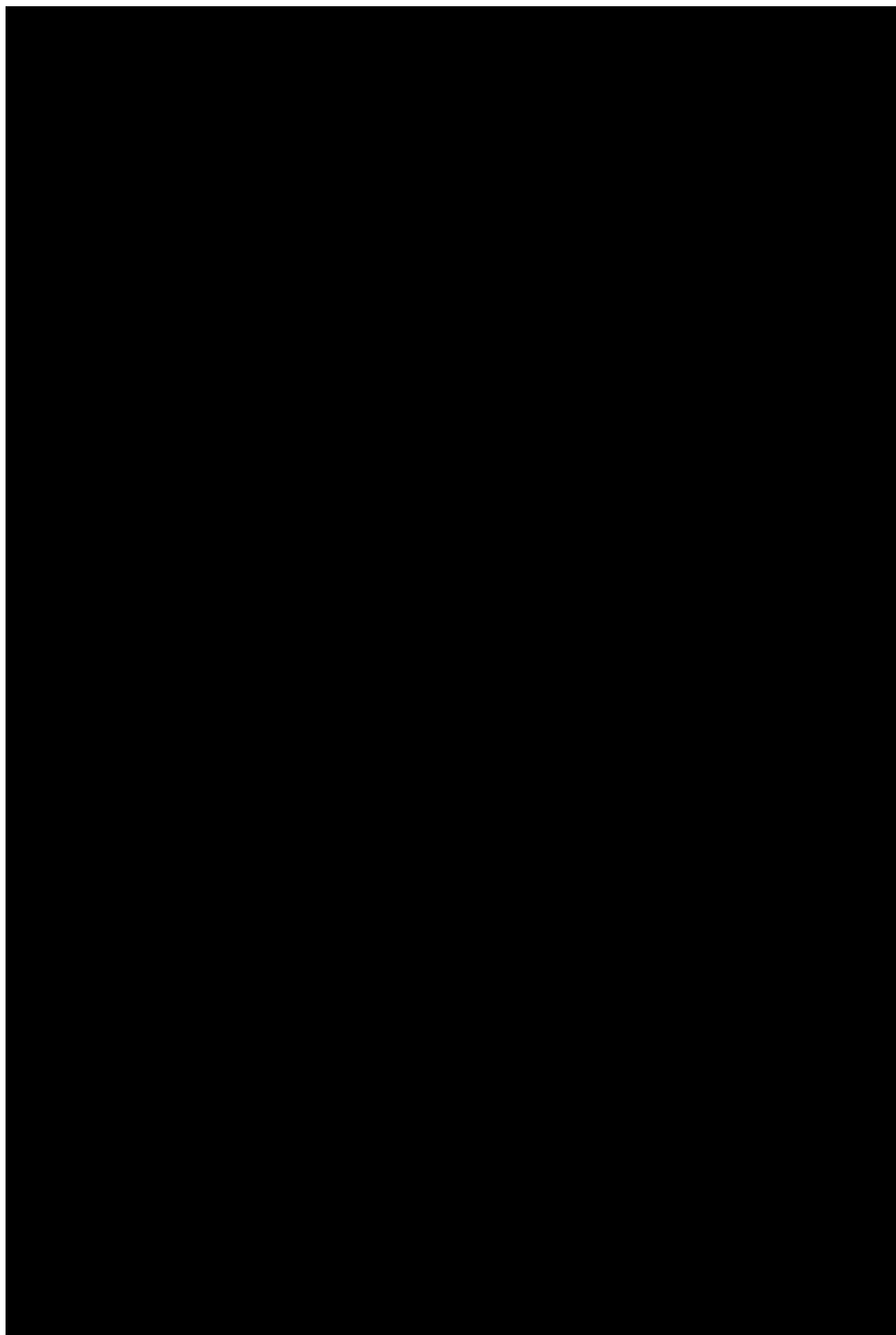
Chughtai's paintings are poems set not to music but colour and line, and like poetry they assume a ritualistic mood and say something more than what is said. Chughtai is a poet as well as a painter. In all Chughtai's pictures, there is an exquisite refinement of mood and method, a lyrical fervour in every line; effects are economically achieved through concentration on the main theme of the picture.

Chughtai is an artist who holds a special place of

his own, somewhere between the extremes of those who on one hand profess to follow archaic Indian influences and those who lean towards Western tendencies in art. He is a kind of "Lone Wolf" among Indian artists, and follows his own way.

His draftsmanship is exquisite; he uses the pencil with the delicacy of a silvery print, in a style, if less calligraphic than is usual for an Oriental, still sinuous in line, flowing and gracious, subtly expressive, full of invention. Being an Oriental, he dispenses with shadows, and what perspective he uses is lineal. Chughtai is also an illuminator and scribe, delighting in intricate arabesques. Chughtai knows what he wants to say and is technically capable of saying it.

Chughtai's life has been one of dedication and determination - and there are many lessons which we can learn from the career of this genius. One which particularly impresses and fascinates me personally is individuality and his confidence in his cultural roots. Without denying himself the benefit and an intelligent awareness of foreign trends and influences, which have shaped western art movements, he has stood firmly on his own ground,



depicting all that is good and beautiful in our life and culture, and in a language of line and colour which has been understood and appreciated at home and abroad.

Chughtai invariably painted single figures, sometimes lightly draped, sometimes heavily draped or semi nudes and even nudes. The poses and attitudes are free, fanciful, whimsical, poetical and sometimes realistic. The man and woman of Chughtai have peculiar faces and anatomy which he assimilated precisely after studying the art of Persia, Ajanta and Kangra.

When we go through his deep study the exaggerated anatomy which occupies Chughtai's painting surfaces freely. The multitudinous features which Chughtai adopted at assorted levels have not deterred him to preserve his own identity which he successfully maintained throughout.

In Chughtai's paintings, pictorial expressions dominate the picture and in their aesthetic qualities can be acknowledged and enjoyed without knowing themes.

He chose the water-colour media for his projections and utilised the infinite capacity of the flowing line work with graded wash colour technique.

Chughtai and his family were enormously secretive and protective about his wash and tempera technique.

Chughtai chosen water colour as his medium he has taken great pains to preserve the light texture and airiness so urgently associated with it. He has never been tempted to use it as a transparent layer of oil colours in order to produce a certain pleasing effect".

He worked as a painter for nearly sixty years, yet none can describe apart from the members of his family his method of work". This means that with the death of Chughtai, this style became a thing of the past in Pakistan.⁴ Though his nephew Abdul Wahid, son of Rahim, who is residing in London is working on the line of Chughtai but again it remains restricted to him only.

No doubt, Chughtai cultivated an unrivalled technique and maintained his separate identity throughout his career of painting.

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List of plates

1. *Pencil outlines & Sketches*
2. *Correspondent materials*
3. *Important certificates and letters of Chughtai*
4. *Hair styles, Footwair, Style of dresses & Turbans*
5. *Chughtais family photographs*



چغتائی میوزیم ٹرسٹ
CHUGHTAI MUSEUM TRUST
Preserving And Promoting The Art Of
M.A. Rahman Chughtai; Hilal-e-Imtiaz (1897-1975)

Filed at:

Dated: 10th December, 1998

To:
Mrs. Rehana Khusro,
C/o S.M.A. Khusro,
(Retd. Distt. Judge),
3/51A Gulmarg Colony,
Civils Line Aligarh-202 002,
INDIA.

Dear Mrs. Rehana

It is a pleasure to hear from you that your thesis subject is "Lyrico Paintings of Chughtai" and this letter is infact a quick reply to inform you that Inshallah you will received our full corporation in all matters related to your subject.

I am glad to know about your Ph.D. topic, a number of lady students from India doing their research on the art of Mohd Abdur Rehman Chughtai, but some students are serious about their work and some are not. I take my work very seriously and sincerely and I also aspects same from you.

I assure you to provide the best material related to your topic in few days. In these days I am busy for our annual show at the occasion of death anniversary and as you know I am the son of the Late artist Mohd Abdur Rehman Chughtai.

I am thankful that you have selected your Ph.D. topic related to the late artist Mohd Abdur Rehman Chughtai. Regards

Your Sincerely

(Arif Rehman Chughtai)

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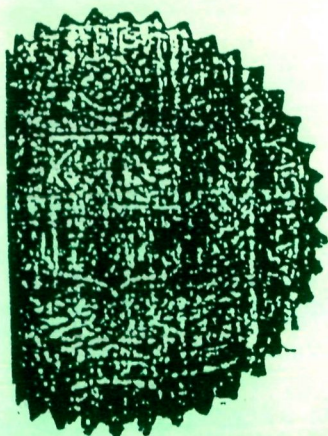
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4 Garden Town
Lahore-16 Pakistan 850003

General Ayub Khan, J.P., J.L.
President of Pakistan.

M.A. Rahman Chughtai, Esquire,

ring :

Know All Men that reposing special Trust in your
loyalty and Integrity and being desirous of according a fitting
Recognition to your Services to Pakistan I do hereby appoint you
said M.A. Rahman Chughtai,
the Rank and Dignity of the Holder of a Hilal
the Order of Imtiyaz, and constitute
the same, with all Rights and Precedence appertaining thereto.
I do order that according to the Prescriptions of the General
Statutes governing the Order, you shall wear the Badge of the
Order according to the Rank and Dignity you hold therein.



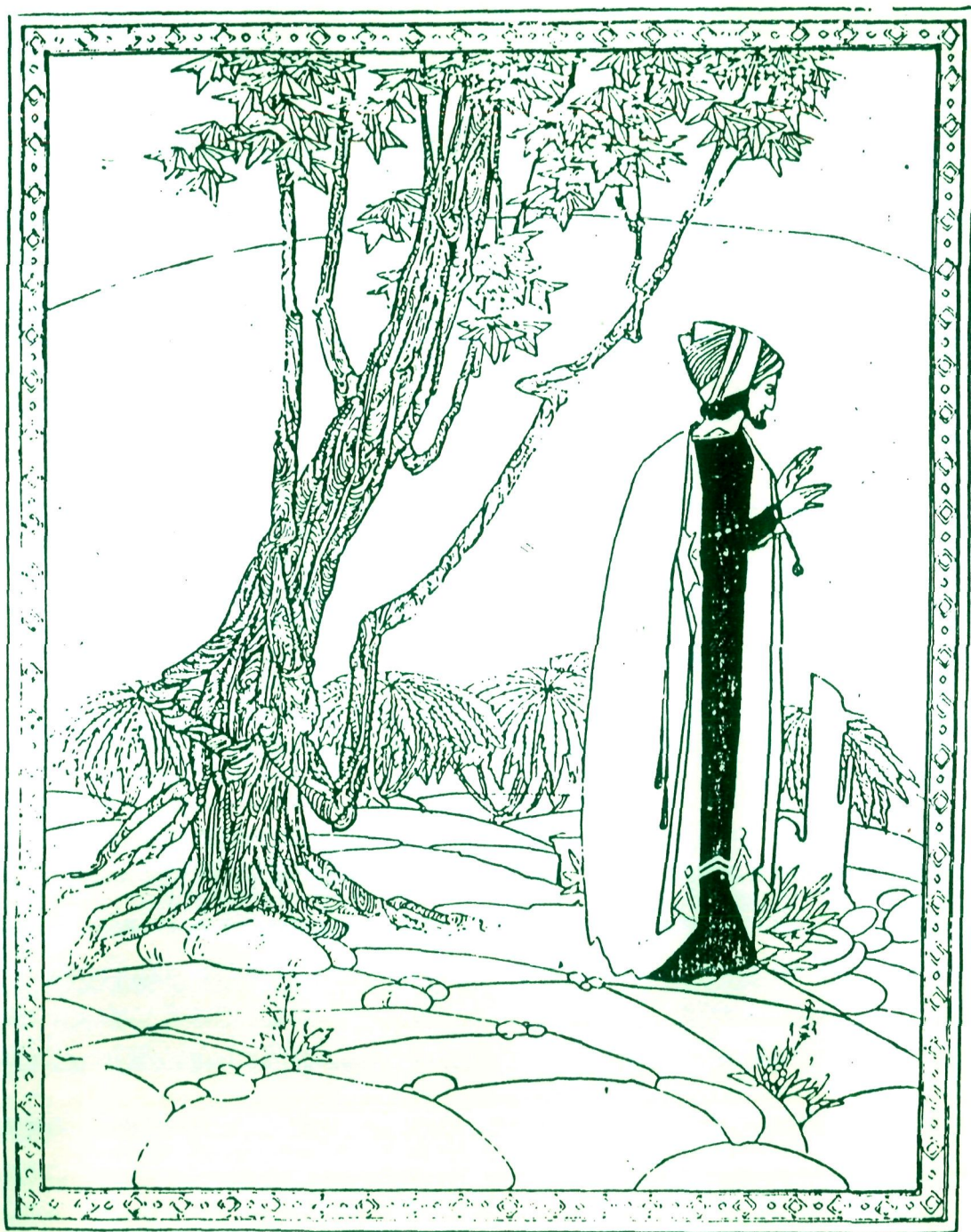
[Signature]

Given at Rawalpindi
this Twenty Seventh day
of October 1959

Chughtai Museum Trust
Mian Salah Uddin Lane
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سازیک ذرہ نہیں فنیں چمن سے بیکار سایہ لالہ بے داغ سویاے بہار





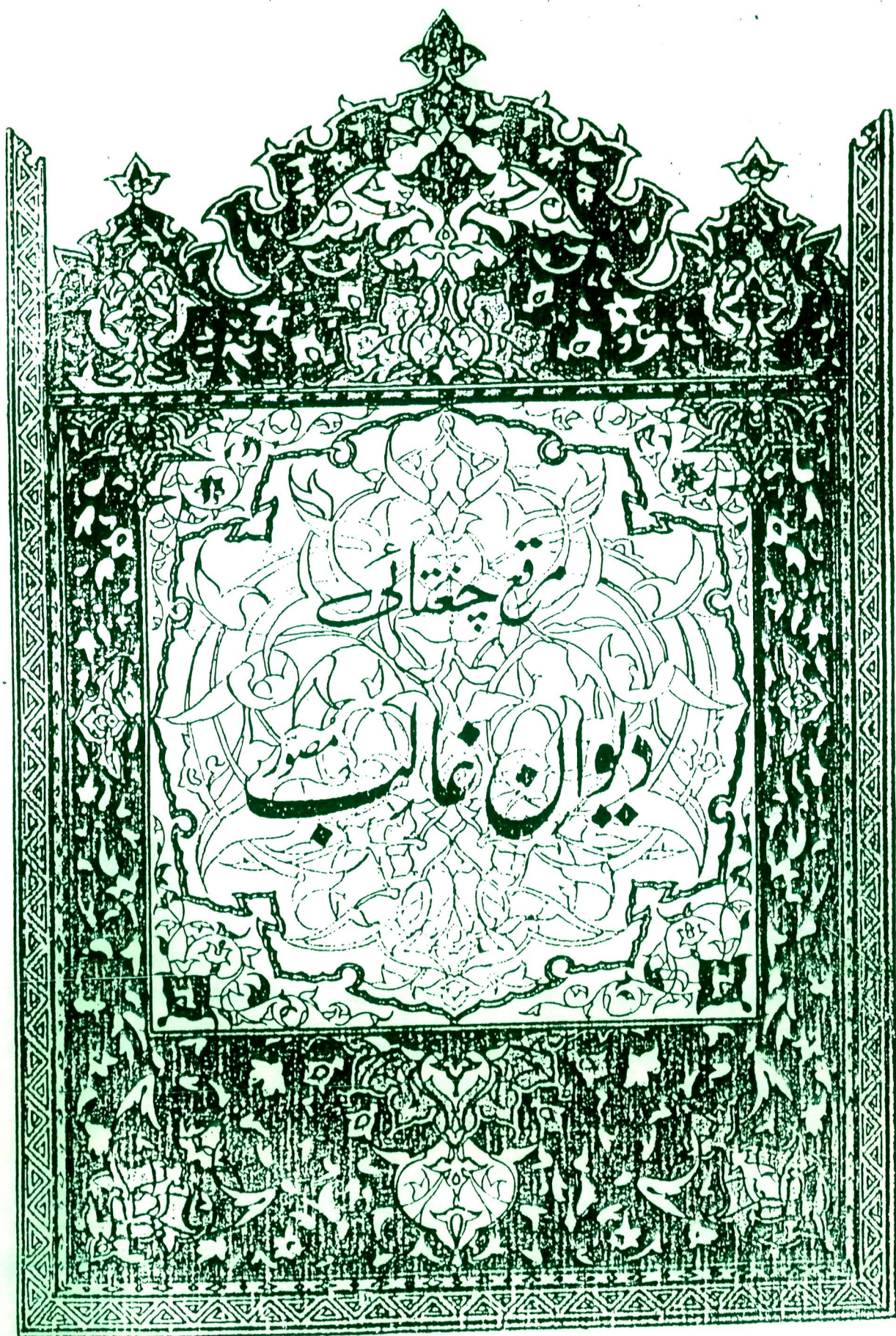


The Designer's Vision

An exhibition show of Design works
of M.A. Rahman Chughtai (1897-1975) from
17th January, 1999 at the premises of Chughtai Museum.

سازیک ذرہ نہیں خمیں چمن سے بیکار سایہ لالہ بے داغ سویدائے بہار







1850 A.D: Mian Salah ud Din son of Karam ud Din Mimar Diyanat Khan Jahandar Shahi, ancestor of M.A. Rahman Chughtai. Miniature by Umar Din Naqash.



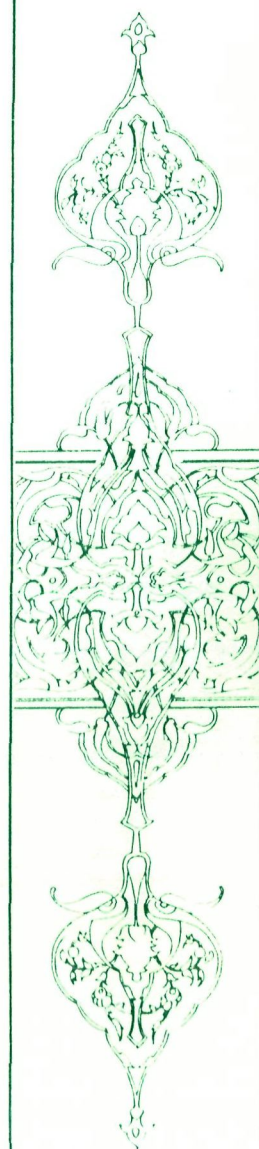
1910 A.D: Mian Kareem Baksh Mimar, father of M.A. Rahman Chughtai. Miniature by Abdur Raheem Chughtai, 1978 AD.



1920 A.D: Miran Baksh Naqash Son of Umar Din Naqash, tutor of M.A. Rahman Chughtai. Photograph by M.A. Rahman Chughtai.



1911 A.D: Begum Wazeer un Nisa wife of M.A. Rahman Chughtai. Photolitho by M.A. Rahman Chughtai.





Father and Son: M.A. Rahman Chughtai holds his son Arif Rahman Chughtai.



Family of M.A. Rahman Chughtai: The artist M.A. Rahman Chughtai with wife Kishwar Iqbal Bano, daughter Mussarat Jahan and son Arif Rahman Chughtai.

